VOL. XIX. No. 3 JANUARY, 1922 No. 75

# THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

# The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies, 25 cents

Published by The Theosophical Society at
305 Washington Street, Brooklyn, New York

July; October; January; April

*Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York*

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 4 Sunningdale Avenue, Walker, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid

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### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered July 17, 1905, at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter under Act of Congress of July 16, 1894

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# NOTES AND COMMENTS

## JANUARY, 1922

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### Roger Bacon, Theosophist

(1214-1294)

*"Perfecti in sapientia divina."*
"Men perfected in divine wisdom."
Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus.*

At the very beginning of his greatest work, the *Opus Majus,* Roger Bacon discusses the "obstacles to real wisdom". Among these obstacles, he puts first the example of weak and unreliable authority and the uncritical acceptance of traditional views. Perhaps we shall be wise to follow his example and, before we try to get a true view of this great Theosophist, set forth and put out of our way certain accepted views of his life and work, which are completely misleading.

The first of these misleading views, which was strongly, though in all probability unconsciously, supported by the popular discussion last Spring of certain cipher manuscripts attributed to him, and made the subject of lectures and articles in Philadelphia, is that Roger Bacon's ideas and principles are at once very mysterious and very little known; that our understanding of them depends on the unravelling of a highly complicated cipher, in a manuscript which is not certainly his, and even the subject of which is still doubtful. But the reality is, that practically every good library contains half a dozen or more of Roger Bacon's authentic works, well edited and with excellent commentaries, and that these easily accessible books set forth, again and again, Roger Bacon's fundamental principles and enumerate his discoveries and forecasts of inventions, in many cases illustrated by his own drawings. As regards his life, it is no exaggeration to say that we know five times as much

about him as we know about Shakespeare, for the reason that, while Shakespeare sedulously keeps his own personality in the background, Roger Bacon, like that other great Theosophist, Paul of Tarsus, inserts many passages of autobiography in his writings. We have, therefore, ample material, and admirable material, for a study of Roger Bacon's thoughts and principles, and this material is easily accessible.

A second and more subtle misunderstanding of Roger Bacon may be illustrated by a passage from Sir William Osler's lecture on *The old Humanities and the new Science,* quoted some months ago in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY: "[Saint Augustine] the moulder of Western Christianity, had not much use for science, and the Greek spirit was stifled in the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. 'Content to be deceived, to live in a twilight of fiction, under clouds of false witnesses, inventing according to convenience, and glad to welcome the forger and the cheat',—such, as Lord Acton somewhere says, were the Middle Ages. Strange, is it not? that one man alone, Roger Bacon, mastered his environment and had a modern outlook. How modern Bacon's outlook was may be judged from the following sentence: 'Experimental science has three great prerogatives over all other sciences—it verifies conclusions by direct experiment; it discovers truths which they could never reach, and it investigates the secrets of nature and opens to us a knowledge of the past and future.' "

We need hardly stop to protest against the very shallow and superficial view of the Middle Ages expressed in the sentences attributed to Lord Acton. What Sir William Osler implies, is our immediate concern, namely, that, in the so-called "conflict between religion and science", Roger Bacon was a pioneer of science, as against religion. Osler does not say this. Perhaps he did not think it. But it is the conclusion which floats on the surface of his words, and it is exactly the reverse of the truth. Roger Bacon invariably thought of experimental science as the handmaid of religion; his whole purpose, in studying natural science, was to lead up to divine science; he thought of wisdom as a unity, with spiritual illumination as its crown. To put it more concretely, he devoted his life to a study of wisdom, in order that first Christendom, and then the whole world, might be illuminated by divine light and brought under divine governance; and from the very beginning to the end of his long life, he thought of the Church as the instrument both of illumination and government. This is, of course, in sharp antithesis to the thought implied by the passage quoted from Sir William Osler.

Roger Bacon's guiding thought, therefore, was a Church, purified and illuminated, bringing divine wisdom and spiritual guidance to the whole world. The probable dates of his birth and death are 1214 and 1292 or 1294. He was, therefore, during about fifty years, the contemporary of two other great men, Albertus Magnus (1206-1280), and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), whose purposes and methods are very

like his own; and, like them, also, he belonged by birth to the upper class of society; like them, also, he has left abundant literary records which are easily accessible.

It would seem wise to think of these three men as, in fact, coöperating at the same task: the illumination of Christendom. All three followed the same general method: the application of Greek philosophy to the better understanding of Christian teaching; in other words, the reconciliation of science and religion, of reason and faith.

They appeared together at what students of Theosophy would be inclined to call a critical cyclic point in the history of Christendom and of the world. The period, from the fifth to the twelfth century, from the submergence of Rome's imperial power to the conscious beginning of the modern nations, was closing, and a remarkable renaissance of Greek philosophic thought was beginning in the Western world.

The channel through which Greek philosophy came to the West in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is a significant factor in the cyclic culmination already spoken of. Though Rome and Italy were largely submerged by the Northern invaders, the Eastern Empire, with Constantinople as its capital and Greek as its language, continued to flourish, and much of Greek philosophy and science remained current there.

Until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Greek speaking Eastern Empire, the "Eastern Rome", was not seriously menaced by the new religious and political power which sprang up in Arabia. On the contrary, the Moslems, as soon as they had established their power about the Tigris and Euphrates, founding a school of philosophy and science at Bagdad, set themselves to learn Greek thoroughly and to master and develop Greek science and philosophy. They made extensive and generally accurate translations, in part directly from the Greek originals, in part from Syriac versions, and they applied the vigorous powers of original genius to the development and perfecting of what they received from the Greeks. In doing this, they contributed an element of Oriental thought and mysticism to the gathered wisdom of Hellas.

As pointed out by J. H. Bridges, the editor of Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus,* from the institution of the school of Bagdad, shortly after the year 800, to the capture of Bagdad in 1258 by the Mongol general Hulacu, scientific and philosophical thought were carried forward with restless energy in this Oriental region. All that had been done by the Greeks in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, chemistry, and natural history, including anatomy, became accessible in Arabic. Even now there are many sections of the works of Galen (Claudius Galenus of Pergamos, A. D. 130-200), that are only known to us through translations from Arabic into Latin. The best part of the work of Apollonius, the greatest, after Archimedes, of Greek geometers, has come to us through the same source. And it would be wrong to suppose that all this Arabic learning was mere dead erudition. "It was alive and grew. The Arabic

instruments of observation were more precise and accurate than those of the Greeks. We owe to them the adoption, if not the discovery, of decimal notation. Albategnius gave new life to the science of trigonometry, and determined with nearer approach to accuracy the precession of the equinoxes. Mohammed ben Musa laid the foundations of modern algebra; Alhazen of optics. To tell of Arabic researches in chemistry and medicine would need a volume" (Bridges, *Essays and Addresses,* 1907, pp. 173-4).

At some future date it may be possible to study more closely this wonderful school in which East and West met, indicating, perhaps, that it represents another critical cycle, a node in the great cycle of the Theosophical Movement. For the present, so far as its aspect of Oriental mysticism is concerned, we must content ourselves with a single quotation from Avicenna (Ibn Sina, born 980), the Persian philosopher to whom Roger Bacon constantly refers: "The full perception of Earthly Beauty was the remembrance of that Supreme Beauty in the Spiritual world. The body was the veil; but by ecstasy (*Hal*) the soul could behold the Divine Mysteries. As Avicenna, in his poem on the soul, has written:

> Lo, it was hurled
> Midst the sign-posts and ruined abodes of this desolate world.
> It weeps, when it thinks of its home and the peace it possessed,
> With tears welling forth from its eyes without pausing or rest,
> And with plaintive mourning it broodeth like one bereft
> O'er such trace of its home as the fourfold winds have left."

This beautiful passage is taken from *The Persian Mystics,* in *"The Wisdom of the East Series"* (1913, p. 21).

This mingling, therefore, of Hellenic science and Oriental mysticism was brought to Western Europe by the Mahomedan invasion of Spain; and, about the year 1150, Archbishop Raymond of Toledo established a school, the purpose of which was the systematic translation of the Arabic books containing it into Latin, many of them being turned first into Spanish, and thus passing through the hands of two or more translators.

Perhaps the best summary of this movement in a single sentence is that of P. Hadelin Hoffmans, writing on Roger Bacon in the Louvain *Neo-Scholastic Review:* "Arabic thought served as the bridge between Greek mysticism and the Augustinian intuitionism of the Middle Ages."

Among others, the three great men already mentioned, Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon and Thomas Aquinas, taking this blended Hellenic and Oriental wisdom, worked to bring it into complete harmony with Christian teaching, and to use the whole to bring light and righteousness to Christendom and the whole world.

To Albertus Magnus, we can at present only give a sentence or two. Albertus "surpassed all his contemporaries, except perhaps Roger Bacon,

in the knowledge of nature", studying physics, geography, astronomy, mineralogy, chemistry, zoology, physiology and even phrenology (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). Albertus himself says: "A man is not perfected in philosophy unless he studies both Aristotle and Plato" (*Met. lib.* I).

We come thus to Roger Bacon. Born of good family at Ilchester in Somersetshire, about 1214, he went early to Oxford, where Robert Grossteste, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was Chancellor and was working hard to establish an efficient Greek school, bringing Greek scholars from the continent. To his example and precept, Bacon owed much and generously expresses his debt. When Bacon was about twenty-five, he went to Paris; the remaining fifty years of his life were spent at the two universities, studying, lecturing, writing.

Endowed with immense spiritual and intellectual vigour, with a mind well rounded and balanced, at once intuitional and accurate, Roger Bacon set himself to develop a complete system of training and education, the aim of which was to set in order, and to communicate, all divine and human wisdom, to be diffused throughout the world by the Church, in part working through the Religious Orders. Perhaps through the influence of the Franciscan, Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt, Roger Bacon had joined the Order founded by Saint Francis of Assisi, who died in 1226, when Roger Bacon was a boy of twelve, or, perhaps, a year or two older. We have no record of his reasons for becoming a Franciscan, but we may surmise that he recognized in Francis of Assisi an ardent agent in the work of spiritual illumination to which his own life was dedicated. Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas were members of the Order of Saint Dominic. Robert Grossteste was a follower of Saint Francis.

By his fiftieth year, Roger Bacon had competely formulated in his own mind the system and method for spreading "divine and human wisdom" throughout Christendom and the world. He got his opportunity through a very remarkable man, Guy le Gros de Foulques, or Fulcodi, a Frenchman renowned as a soldier and a lawyer, who had been secretary to Saint Louis, and who, after his wife's death, had entered the Church and reached the rank of Cardinal. He met Roger Bacon, probably at Oxford, and discussed with him current abuses and plans of reform and education. In 1265, Cardinal Fulcodi became Pope, as Clement IV. On June 22, 1266, Pope Clement IV wrote from Viterbo to Roger Bacon, commanding him to send immediately a written account of his ideas, notwithstanding the prohibition of superiors or general constitutions; but to keep the commission secret.

To this invitation, which gave him the great opportunity for which he had waited and hoped, Roger Bacon replied with enthusiastic humility: "The Head of the Church has sought me, the unworthy sole of its foot. . . . I feel myself elevated above my ordinary strength; I con-

ceive a new fervour of spirit. I ought to be more than grateful, since your Beatitude has asked me for that which I have most ardently desired to communicate, which I have worked at with immense toil, and brought into light after manifold expenses."

Though he had toiled with this aim of ordering all wisdom for nearly forty years, Roger Bacon had no written summary of his work ready. He, therefore, set to work and, during the next year, wrote such a summary, expressly for Clement IV. This is known as the *Opus Majus;* it was followed by two additional summaries, the *Opus Minus* and *Opus Tertium;* and these three the *Greater Work,* the *Lesser Work* and the *Third Work,* with some other treatises expanding parts of these, form his literary gift to mankind.

The *Opus Majus* is divided into seven parts. A brief summary of these will give a clear idea of Roger Bacon's principles, ideas, and purpose. We may lead up to this by giving the much briefer outline in the *Compendium Studii Philosophiae:*

"In the order of teaching, grammar and logic stand first. Then follows mathematics; and physics, according to the suggestion of Avicenna, follows mathematics; and metaphysics follows physics; for the conclusions of the other sciences are the starting point of metaphysics. Morals are last in order, for their object is practical and the good of man, and therefore they are the proper conclusion of all the rest." With this general outline in mind, we may go back to the *Opus Majus:*

Part I enumerates "the obstacles to real wisdom." These are (1) the example of weak and unreliable authority; (2) the force of tradition and the continuance of accepted opinions; (3) an undue regard to the views of the unlearned; and (4) the concealment of one's own ignorance, while making a show of apparent wisdom.

Part II deals with the relation between theology and philosophy. Roger Bacon holds that all sciences are founded on the sacred sciences. He believes in a primeval revelation, and finds records of this revelation not only in the Bible, but also in the Greek and Oriental philosophers. In setting forth the relation of all sciences to the divine sciences, he writes in a way which is eminently Theosophical:

"All things should be ascertained through experience. But experience is twofold; one path is through the outer senses; this is human and philosophical experience, so much as a man can attain, according to the grace given to him; but this experience is not enough for a man, because it does not give full certainty about corporeal things, and attains to nothing at all concerning spiritual things." He then insists on the need of purity of heart as a condition of wisdom: "For the wicked man is the ignorant man, as Aristotle says in the second book of the *Ethics.* And Algazel says, in his *Logic* [Al Gazali, translated at Toledo], that a soul befouled by sins is like a mirror rusted, in which the images of things cannot appear clearly; but the soul adorned with

virtues is like a well polished mirror, in which the forms of things are clearly seen. For it is impossible for the soul to rest in the light of truth while it is spotted with sins; but, as a parrot or a magpie, it will recite strange words which it learns through long repetition; and this is proven, because the beauty of truth learned in its radiance draws men to the love of it, but the proof of love is the showing of works. And, therefore, he who works contrary to truth must of necessity be ignorant of it, even though he can weave together most ornate words and repeat the views of others, as an animal repeats the words of men, and as a monkey strives to carry through the works of men, although it does not understand their purpose. Therefore holiness renders the mind lucid, so that it apprehends more easily not only questions of morals but those of science also" (*Opus Majus, II,* p. 170). Later on, he adds: "Therefore it is necessary that the intellect should have help from elsewhere, and therefore the holy patriarchs and prophets, who first gave the sciences to the world, received interior illumination, and did not stand on the senses alone" (*ibid.* p. 192). It will be noted that Bacon cites the holy patriarchs and prophets, the Greek and Oriental philosophers as equally sources of wisdom, and the vein of irony which runs through his work will also be noted.

Part III of the *Opus Majus* takes up the question of the written records of wisdom, for the most part in tongues other than Latin, and therefore needing translation. He lays down the admirable rule that a translator must know two things: first, the languages; then the subject; and he criticises certain translations unsparingly, because those who made them lacked one, or the other, or both of these requirements. What he says of current versions of the Bible is among the most interesting and valuable parts of his work. He thoroughly understands and lucidly sets forth the principles of sound textual criticism, as applied not only to Saint Jerome's Vulgate, but as involving also the Greek Septuagint and the Hebrew originals. Therefore he insists on a thorough acquaintance with the oldest manuscripts, and with the original tongues, Greek, Hebrew and Chaldaean. He does more, he sets an example, by preparing a practical Greek grammar, a part of which has been printed, and by doing some work in Hebrew also. Whether he knew Arabic or not, cannot be certainly decided. He goes even further than this, outlining the principles of comparative philology. With Greek must be studied its various dialects, comparable to the French dialects of Normandy, Picardy, and Burgundy, or the four marked dialects of English. He perceived the kinship between Hebrew, Chaldaean and Arabic, which suggests that he knew at least a little of all three.

Part IV deals with mathematics and its relation to "the sacred sciences". Mathematics, he says "is the gate and key of the natural sciences and the alphabet of philosophy. In mathematics alone we have a perfect and complete demonstration. While, therefore, mathematics

is necessary for all science whatsoever, it is particularly needful and useful for natural philosophy."

Part V deals with optics, which rests immediately on mathematics. Here we come to a much controverted question: Did Roger Bacon discover the telescope, three and a half centuries before its recognized discovery by Galileo in 1609? As bearing on this question, we may quote these sentences from his writings:

"It would be requisite to obtain men who have a good knowledge of optics and of optical instruments. For optics is the science of seeing truly, and by seeing we know all things. This science certifies mathematics and all other things, because astronomical instruments work only by vision, in accordance with the laws of that science. . . . Optical instruments are very difficult to obtain, and more costly than mathematical instruments" (*Opus Tertium*).

"Optical instruments can be so formed that things far off may appear close at hand and the converse; so that from an incredible distance we may read the smallest letters, and see things that are very small, and make the stars appear where we wish" (*De Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae*).

Roger Bacon thoroughly understood how a parabolic mirror brings rays of light to a true focus; he was also familiar with the properties of a convex lens. The two combined make the simplest form of astronomical telescope. That he made this combination and used it, has not been certainly proved, but what he says of optical instruments used in astronomy to make the stars appear where we wish, renders it highly probable that he speaks from actual experience. We know that he spent large sums on instruments, and he tells us that his friend and teacher, Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt, worked for three years at a concave mirror. It seems difficult to resist the conclusion that he understands the use of the telescope, even suggesting the name of "the optical instrument which makes things far off appear [*tele-scope*] close at hand". That a man like Roger Bacon, so saturated with the thought of experiment, so practically interested in instruments, should master the theory and not seek to apply it, is hardly credible; that he did so apply it, is strongly suggested by his description.

One of the minor difficulties in the way of understanding the thoughts of Roger Bacon, is the fact that many words which he uses have since his time changed their meaning. Thus, what he calls "speculative alchemy," we should call theoretical chemistry; and so in the word "astrology", he included the theoretical part of astronomy, while he used "astronomy" rather for the applied science, including observations used in navigation and geography. But Roger Bacon, like Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, did believe in the influence of the heavenly bodies on the earth and on mankind, though he carefully limits this influence:

"True mathematicians and astrologers lay down no necessity, no infallibility, in their predictions of contingent events. . . . What they do is to consider the way in which the body may be affected by celestial things, and the way in which the body may act upon the mind in private affairs or public, always without prejudice to the freedom of the will. For although the reasonable soul is not coerced to any future actions, yet it may be strongly stirred and induced, so as freely to will those things towards which celestial force may incline it. . . . Far more potent than the impressions of earthly things are those of the heavenly upon bodily organs, which being strongly moved, men are led on to actions of which they had not thought before, yet always with full reservation of the freedom of the will" (*Opus Majus*).

Roger Bacon has much to say of the application of astronomical observations to geography, in the determination of latitudes and longitudes, and it appears certain that he deduced the spherical form and approximate size of the earth. Regarding this point, Bridges says, in his Introduction to the *Opus Majus:*

"Pierre d'Ailly, in his *Imago Mundi,* written early in the fifteenth century, discussing the relations of the extreme east and west of the habitable globe, has a long passage treating of the probable proximity of Spain and India. For all that appears in the work, this passage is his own. But in fact it is a verbal quotation from the fourth part of the *Opus Majus* (1266). And it has a history worth recording. For it is cited in 1498 in a letter from Columbus to Ferdinand and Isabella, as one of the authorities that had put it into his mind to venture on his great voyage". Humboldt asserts that the *Imago Mundi* (embodying this passage from Roger Bacon) "exercised a greater influence on the discovery of America than did the correspondence with the learned Florentine Toscanelli."

Bridges has also much that is of interest and value to say of the relation of Robert Grossteste and Roger Bacon to the reform of the Julian calendar, and of Bacon's relation to the work of Copernicus, who revived the teaching, anticipated by the *Vishnu Purana* and Pythagoras, that the sun, and not the earth, is the centre of the solar system.

Part VI of the *Opus Majus* is concerned with experimental science, or the experimental method. Considerations of space prevent our giving this very valuable and prophetic section of his work the study it deserves. We must content ourselves with two illustrations, from his supplementary writings. In the *Opus Tertium,* he thus outlines theoretical and practical chemistry:

"There is another science, which treats of the generation of things from their elements, and of all inanimate [inorganic] things; as of the elements and liquids, simple and compound, common stones, gems and marbles, gold and other metals, sulphur, salts, pigments, lapis lazuli, red lead and other colours, oils, bitumen, and infinite more, of which

we find nothing in the books of Aristotle; nor are the natural philosophers or any of the Latins acquainted with these things. And, as they are ignorant of these things, they can know nothing of that which follows in physics; that is, of the generation of animate things, as vegetables, animals and man."

In the *Opus Minus,* basing himself on Avicenna, he suggests an interesting relation between the elements and the heavenly bodies; between gold and the sun, silver and the moon, copper and Venus, lead and Saturn, tin and Jupiter, iron and Mars. That he had some experience in practical chemistry is suggested by the sentence: "There are very few who can carry out distillation, or sublimation, or calcination properly, or resolve [analyze], or perform other operations of this kind."

Of magnetism, he has much to say, speaking of the attraction of unlike poles, while like poles repel each other "as the lamb flees the wolf". This he probably learned from Petrus Peregrinus, whose valuable work on magnetism is extant, and to whom is ascribed the invention of the pivoted compass card.

Perhaps even more interesting is the forecast of inventions in his work, *De Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae, et de Nullitate Magiae,* in which, after unveiling the manifold tricks of charlatans and pretenders to magical knowledge, in accordance with his principle, *"In nullo laedenda est Veritas,"*—"Truth must suffer no detriment".—he goes on to speak of (1) ships that will move without oars, with a single helmsman; (2) cars moving without animals, "with an inconceivable impetus"; (3) flying machines, so that a man may sit in the middle of the instrument, turning a certain engine (*aliquod ingenium*) by which wings artfully composed may beat the air, in the fashion of a flying bird; (4) a small instrument which will raise immense weights; by an instrument three fingers high and the same breadth, a man can lift himself and his friends; (5) a machine by which a man can draw a thousand men to himself against their wills: and "endless such things can be made, such as bridges across rivers without piers or supports, and machines and engines unheard of".

He speaks of gunpowder, giving the right constitutents, sulphur, nitre, and charcoal, and says that a quantity of gunpowder the size of a thumb, when exploded, "makes a horrible sound and shows vehement corruscations."

Roger Bacon is, therefore, a supreme example of the proverb he quotes from Aristotle: "All men by nature desire to know"; but, if we would judge him rightly, we should remember his own fine saying: "The end of all true philosophy is to arrive at a knowledge of the Creator through knowledge of the created world." All that has gone before is intended to lead up to that moral philosophy, completely Christian in the highest sense, which trains man's spiritual and immortal part.

Part VII of the *Opus Majus* is concerned with this moral science, which is, for him, the seventh principle of wisdom. This, he says, "is

the practicable science in the highest sense, which teaches us the ways of good and evil."

To this theme, he makes the Greeks and Orientals contribute, equally with the Hebrews. His method is characteristically Theosophical. But we can do more than suggest his conclusions by reciting the "seven degrees of mystic intuition", as he gives them:

(1) Illumination purely scientific;

(2) Illumination toward righteousness;

(3) The seven gifts of the Spirit enumerated by Isaiah (ch. xi, 2: The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord);

(4) The Gospel beatitudes;

(5) The spiritual senses;

(6) The fruits of the Holy Spirit;

(7) Ecstasy, wherein the soul sees and hears things which it is not permitted to man to reveal.

Here, we have an outline of the path of the disciple, and here we must end. What, then, was the practical fruit of this great Theosophist's life-work? Whether the three treatises reached Clement IV, whether he read them, we do not certainly know. He died a few months later, and his successors were less friendly. It is recorded that Roger Bacon was imprisoned by the authorities of the Franciscan Order; but that this imprisonment seriously hindered his life work, it is difficult to believe, in view of the immense scope of his writings, as we have them.

We must conclude that neither the death of his friend nor the restraint imposed upon him by his Order was the real reason why his intense labours bore so little fruit. The practical reason was the failure of his immediate disciples, whether through sloth or stupidity. He was too great for his age; too great, perhaps, for the succeeding ages also. Only now, after seven centuries, is his conception of the unity of all wisdom, human and divine, making for spiritual life and immortality, fully grasped; and it is grasped only by students of Theosophy, who are ready to say, with him, "The Way of Salvation is one, though the steps be many; Wisdom is the Way of Salvation."

# IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH
# KATHA UPANISHAD

Translated from the Sanskrit with an Interpretation

## IV.

*The knowers of the Eternal, they who know the five sacred fires, they who offer the triple fire of Nachiketas, tell of the two, the shadow and the light, entering the hidden place in the upper half of the life-cycle, and there drinking spiritual power in the world of good works.*

THIS is what students of Theosophy, using a word taken from the Buddhism of Tibet, describe as the teaching of Devachan. "The shadow and the light" are the principles of Manas and Buddhi, the latter the manifestation of Atma; after death, the higher triad is withdrawn into "the hidden place", the higher, subjective plane, and there draws in spiritual power, energy and refreshment for the spiritual nature, in preparation for the following rebirth.

The symbol of the "five fires" is taken from the five fires in the dwelling of the religious householder; but, esoterically, the dwelling is man himself; the fires, really seven in number, are spiritual powers, manifestations or reflections of the fire of Buddhi. This is made clear in the great dialogue between King Pravahana and Shvetaketu Aruneya, the opening sections of which have been translated in an earlier comment. This dialogue sets forth the fundamental Mystery Teaching which contrasts the Path of the Sun, also called the Path of the Gods, which is the way of Liberation, with the Path of the Moon and of the Fathers, which is the way of Reincarnation through Karma and bondage to personality. Of those who follow the latter path, it is said that, at death, they go to the "lunar world", and become "the food of the gods", the divine element in them gathering and assimilating the harvest of the life just ended. Then, after they have dwelt in the lunar world so long as the accumulation of their good works lasts, they descend again into incarnation through the door of birth, the character and rank of that birth being determined by their conduct in the earlier births. (*Chhandogya Upanishad,* 5, 10, 5-8.)

*May we gain power over the sacrificial fire of Nachiketas, which is the bridge of those who sacrifice, and which is the imperishable Eternal, the Supreme; the bridge of those who seek to pass over to the farther shore where no fear is.*

This verse picks up and expands the reference to the sacrificial fire

of Nachiketas, spoken of in the preceding verse. That sacrifice is, in reality, the way of Initiation, with its threefold sacrifice, transforming body, soul and spirit; this is the bridge which leads to the fearless shore. The root of the word to "cross over" is the root of the word Avatar, one who, having crossed over, returns again to lead others by the same way.

*Know the Higher Self as the lord of the chariot, and the body as the chariot; know the soul as the charioteer, and the mind and emotional nature as the reins.*

*They say that the powers of perception and action are the horses, and that objective things are the roadways for these; the Self joined with the powers through the mental and emotional nature is called the enjoyer of experience by the wise.*

*But he who is without understanding, with mind and emotional nature ever uncontrolled, of such a one his powers of perception and action are not under his command, like the unruly horses of the charioteer.*

*But he who is possessed of understanding, with mind and emotional nature controlled, his powers of perception and action are under his command, like the well-ruled horses of the charioteer.*

*But he who is not possessed of understanding, with ungoverned mind and emotional nature, ever impure, gains not that goal, but follows the circling path of death and rebirth.*

*But he who possesses understanding, with well governed mind and emotional nature, ever pure, he indeed gains that goal, from which he returns not to rebirth.*

*But the man who, using the wisdom of the charioteer, keeps the mind and emotional nature, the reins, well in hand, he gains the consummation of the way, the supreme goal of the divine Pervading Power.*

This famous simile of the chariot, which is used by Plato also, suggests the setting of the *Bhagavad Gita,* where Krishna and Arjuna ride in the chariot between the assembled armies. But, while Krishna acts as Arjuna's charioteer, the simile here is somewhat changed; the lord of the chariot is Atma, the Higher Self; he acts through Buddhi, the charioteer, with Manas, the combined mental and emotional nature, as the reins; the five powers of perception and the five powers of action which act through the organs of the body are the horses, and the world of objective life is the road. The ideal is, that the intelligence and will of Buddhi, which embodies Atma, should rule firmly the mental and emotional nature in conformity with Atma, so that the mind thinks spiritual thoughts and the heart entertains spiritual desires; these spiritual thoughts and purposes being then expressed in outer action in the world. Every perception and power must be made obedient to divine wisdom

and will, so that Divine Wisdom is made a living power in every part of life.

The last three verses again sum up the Mystery Teaching: He who follows Divine Wisdom reaches the goal of the Logos, the divine Pervading Power, called here Vishnu; but he who is under the sway of personality falls again into rebirth through the bondage of Karma.

There is an exact parallel in the Revelation of Saint John: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the City of my God" (3, 12).

*Higher than the powers of perception and action are the impulses; and higher than the impulses is the mental and emotional nature; but higher than the mental and emotional nature is the soul; and higher than the soul is the Self, the Great One.*

*Higher than the Great Self is the Supreme Unmanifested; higher than the Unmanifested is Spirit. Higher than Spirit is nothing; Spirit is the goal, the highest Way.*

*This Self, hidden in all beings, shines not forth, but by the keen and subtile vision of seers the Self is perceived.*

*He who has gained illumination should control speech and mind; he should rule them through the Self which is wisdom; the Self which is wisdom he should rule through the Self which is mighty; this he should rule through the Self which is Peace.*

The phrase "mental and emotional nature" here, as before, is used to translate Manas; Buddhi is translated soul; Atma is translated Self. It is evident that we have here one aspect of the Principles, taken in order from the lowest to the highest, with the universal Principles, the Logos, manifested and unmanifested, and Spirit, or Parabrahm, from which the Logos, the Higher Self, the soul and powers of man come forth.

It would seem, as was earlier suggested, that we have here passages from a Book of Discipline for Disciples, supplementing the Drama of Initiation. The closing verse, bidding the disciple who has gained illumination to control speech and mind, seems to suggest three consecutive steps in spiritual progress; three degrees, let us say, of the Spiritual Man.

*Arise ye! Awake ye! Having obtained your boons, thoroughly understand them. A razor's edge, sharp, hard to pass over, a path difficult to tread is this, as seers declare.*

*Without sound, without touch, passing not away, without taste, everlasting, without odour, beginningless, unending, higher than the Great One, set firm,—perceiving That, he is set free from the mouth of Death.*

*Having declared this immemorial Teaching of Nachiketas, spoken forth by Death, hearing it, the wise man grows great in the world of the Eternal.*

*Whoever recites this supreme hidden teaching in the assembly of the Eternal, or with devotion at the time of the sacrifice for those who have gone forth—he builds for the everlasting; he builds for the everlasting.*

The words "Arise ye! Awake ye!" indicate, as was earlier suggested, the ending of the Drama of the Mysteries which the *Katha Upanishad,* like many of the dialogues in the Upanishads, appears to constitute: a ceremony in which many take part and not simply a dramatized tale of Nachiketas. The benediction at the close resembles the blessing which ends the Bhagavad Gita; may it rest on the present translator!

The second part of the Upanishad has not even the appearance of continuing the drama between Death and Nachiketas, except at its close. It would seem to consist of excerpts from a Book of Discipline for Disciples; pages chosen for their philosophical depth and religious feeling, rather than as embodying the more technical teachings.

*The Self-being pierced the openings of the senses outward; therefore man looks outward, not within, toward the Self.*

*A certain wise man, with reverted vision, turned his sight toward the Self, seeking immortality.*

*The children of men go after outward desires; they go to the widespread net of Death. Therefore the wise, beholding immortality, seek not that which is permanent among impermanent things.*

*That, through which he discerns form, taste, odour, sounds, mutual contacts, by that, verily, he discerns wisdom; for what else is there left here? This, verily, is That.*

*That through which he beholds both dreaming and waking, meditating on this Great One, the Lord, the Self, the wise man grieves no more.*

*He who has come to know this taster of honey as the Self, the Life, near at hand, Master of what has been and what shall be, thereafter seeks not to hide himself from That. This, verily, is That.*

*He who of old was born of fervent brooding, born of old from the waters, who, entering into the hidden place, standing there, looked forth through beings: This, verily, is That.*

*She who comes to birth through the Life, the Mother, clothed with divinity, she who, entering into the hidden place, standing there, was born through beings: This, verily, is That.*

*The Fire-lord hidden in the fire-sticks, like the germ well borne by those who bear the germ, day by day to be adored by the sons of men who keep vigil, offering oblations, the Lord All-knowing: This, verily, is That.*

*That, whence rises the sun, and whither he goes to his setting, in Him all Bright Powers are set firm, nor does any transcend Him: This, verily, is That.*

From the primordial waters, the hidden deeps of the Unmanifested Infinite, through fervent brooding, the Manifested Logos came forth, to be born as consciousness in the hearts of all creatures, looking forth through the eyes of all beings; as a twin power, yet subordinate, appeared the feminine form of the Logos, the Mother, who is manifested in the lives of all beings.

As the two fire-sticks evolve fire between them, so these two aspects of the Logos evolve all life; life personified as Divine Fire, which, at one extreme, is the inspiration of genius and, at the other, is the warmth of natural life. This, verily, is That: this manifestation and all manifestations are the Life and Light of the Logos, the One: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." A better translation is, perhaps, "The darkness overcame it not."

How is the Logos to be found? The answer is given in the opening sentence: "The Logos pierced the openings outward, therefore man looks outward, not within, toward the Self. A certain wise man, with reverted vision, turned his sight toward the Self, seeking immortality."

Lao Tse's teaching is identical: "This is the nature of the Way, the Logos: It is without form, It is concealed. Within It are the forms of beings. Within It are beings. Within It is the Spiritual Power. Within It is the unchanging Witness. It is the door through which all beings come forth. How do I know that it is thus with all beings? I know it through the Way, the Logos" (*Tao-Teh-King*, 21).

*That, verily, which is here, that, indeed, is there; that which is there, that is also here. From death to death he goes, who beholds difference in this.*

*By mind and heart, verily, it is to be apprehended that there is in this no difference at all. From death to death he passes, who beholds difference in this.*

*The Spirit, of the measure of a thumb, stands in the midst, in the Self; Master of what has been and what shall be; therefrom he seeks not to conceal himself: This, verily, is That.*

*The Spirit, of the measure of a thumb, like a flame that is without smoke; Master of what has been and what shall be; the same to-day, the same to-morrow: This, verily, is That.*

*As water, rained on broken ground, flows away among the mountains, so he who beholds the properties of life scattered abroad, runs hither and thither after them.*

*As pure water, poured into pure water, becomes one with it, thus, verily, is the Self of the silent sage, who has attained to wisdom, O Gautama.*

This is the teaching of the Oneness of Divinity, the Unity which Lao Tse also reverences. That which is there, in the spiritual world, namely, Divine Spirit itself, is here also in this manifested world, for this manifested world is Spirit and Spirit only.

The Spirit of the measure of a thumb is the same divine Life hid within us that Christ compared to a grain of mustard seed: smaller than small, yet mightier than mighty: "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

*Standing in command of the eleven-doored dwelling of the Unborn, of unbending consciousness, he grieves not; and, being set free, he is free: This, verily, is That.*

*The Swan in the ether, the Power in the interspace, the Priest at the altar, the Guest in the dwelling; dwelling in man, in the gift, in righteousness, in the clear sky; born in the waters, born in the sacred cow, born in righteousness, born in the mountains, is the Righteous, the Great One.*

*He leads upward the forward-life; He impels the downward-life. All the Powers worship the Dwarf seated in the midst.*

*When this Lord of the body, who dwells within the body, departs, set free from the body, what, indeed, remains there? This, verily, is That.*

*No mortal lives by the forward-life or by the downward-life; but the mortal lives through another, in Whom these two are set firm.*

*Behold, This shall I declare to thee, the Eternal, hidden, immemorial; and also how it is with the Self, coming to death, O Gautama: To the womb go some, for the embodying of the Lord of the body; to that which moves not go others; according to their Work, according as they have heard.*

The commentary attributed to Shankara Acharya, speaking of the eleven-doored dwelling of the Self, the body, enumerates, besides the eyes, nostrils, ears and mouth, an added "door in the head," which would seem to be the same as "the opening at the dividing of the hair," a door of divine vision and inspiration, spoken of in another Upanishad.

There follow beautiful symbols of the Self: the divine Swan soaring in the ether; the Power in the interspace, mediating between heaven and earth; the Priest perpetually offering sacrifice; the Guest in the dwelling, through whose presence the body is the temple of God.

The sacred cow is the symbol at once of the Holy Spirit, which gives each day our spiritual nourishment sufficient for the day, and of mother Earth, nourisher of all.

The Dwarf seated in the midst is once again the Spirit of the measure of a thumb, smaller than small, yet mightier than mighty. In this divine Life are set firm the forward-life, which goes forth in sight through the eyes, in speech through the lips, and the downward-life, which builds outer perception and outer nourishment into the body. No mortal lives by these; as it is written: "Man shall not live by bread alone."

As to the fate of those who go forth at death, the deeper meaning would seem to be that some enter again into birth, through the bonds of Karma, of their works, while others, following the Path of the Gods, attain that quiet dwelling from whence they "go no more out."

C. J.

*(To be continued)*

# SAINT CLARE OF ASSISI[1]

WHEN Saint Francis was dying, and felt that the end was near, be bade the brothers carry him forth that he might look once more upon Assisi. Lifting up his eyes to the ancient little city on the hill, with its streets running one above the other in terraces up the steep hill-side, and its small stone houses crowded together, and to the smiling country stretching away outside its walls and gates, he prayed aloud and said: "Blessed be thou of God, Holy City, for many souls shall be saved because of thee." St. Francis spoke truly, for there, where he himself had been born and had lived and laboured for his Lord—there, too, Clare was born, and there her childhood was spent.

Clare means brightness, and this name had been given to her when she was baptized in the Cathedral of St. Rufino, where St. Francis had been baptized twelve years earlier. For shortly before her birth a vision had come to her mother, Ortolana, a devout and pious woman, full of good works; kneeling in prayer before the Cross she had heard a voice which said to her that this child, which was to be born, would be a light which would enlighten the whole world. So she was called Clare—Lady Clare—for she belonged to a rich and noble family. But although Clare lived in a palace, surrounded by wealth and luxury, her heart and her real life were centred in things far removed from the life of the world. Many are the stories which are told of her as a child:—of how she used little stones to count the number of prayers she had said, carrying into her games the spirit of devotion with which her child's heart was even then full; of her goodness to the poor, and of how she would save for them those morsels of food of which she was most fond, in order that she might give to Christ, not those things which she herself did not want, but those which she wanted the most. Even then she, who later on called herself a little plant in Christ's garden, passionately loved flowers, and spent much time in weaving garlands and wreaths with which to adorn the image of the Infant Jesus in the churches. So is the picture of those early years that of a child tender-hearted and loving, of unusual intelligence and beauty, truly good, joyous, and gay and singing as she played among the flowers, herself a fragrant flower, those games into which the thought of the Divine Child was ever woven, through which there must have flashed sometimes, as she grew older, a glimpse of the beatific vision.

As a child, Clare must often have seen St. Francis, often have heard the tales that were told about him: first of his early youth and of his wild pranks and extravagances; of his going to the wars; then of the

[1] An address delivered to a Church congregation.

profound change that came over him, of his goodness to the poor and his alms-giving, of his nursing the lepers; later of his rebuilding the ruined church of St. Damian, begging the stones and carrying them one by one on his shoulders and placing them in order with the help of the poor priest; finally of his choice of the royal road of poverty, of his forsaking all for love of Christ. She heard these stories on every side. Men that her family knew, men of her own family, joined him. She was fired, stirred. Her whole heart and mind became filled with the desire to follow along that same road. For more and more, as she had grown older, had she come to love quiet and contemplation; more and more had she turned away from the things of the world to that real life which she found within. It became increasingly clear to her, too, that soon she must choose where her duty lay, which path she would tread, for her family and her relatives were even then persistently urging upon her a most brilliant marriage.

She was sixteen years of age when St. Francis first preached in the Cathedral. His words were a revelation to her, her most secret inquiries seemed to be answered, her problems and her perplexities were seen in a clear and radiant light, her heart was filled with a new peace and joy and fervour—and a new determination. She must hear more. So she went to the Saint with her aunt, who sympathized with her, as companion, and talked with him, opening her heart to him and telling him of her desire to serve, and to leave the world and live in holy poverty. Again and again, at intervals, she talked with him. Moved as he must have been, St. Francis may have wished to try her, he may have delayed with design in order that she might be sure. It is said that he commanded her, as a proof of her devotion and of the reality of her desire, to beg her bread from door to door in Assisi. But full of courage, knowing that the Kingdom of Heaven may only be taken by violence, Clare, dressed as a beggar, obeyed.

Finally, on Palm Sunday in the year 1212, when Clare was eighteen years of age, the sign for which she had been waiting came, and she could no longer doubt or delay. St. Francis preached that day, and as she listened, Clare was overwhelmed with a torrent of feeling. Never before had the things of the world seemed of such little worth; never before had she so longed with her whole heart and soul to renounce all, to give herself to her Lord. When the sermon was ended, the people all pressed forward to receive the palms from the hands of the priest. Clare, in humility, silently held back, still under the spell of St. Francis's words, waiting for she knew not what. The Bishop saw her in the shadows, and, coming down, went to her, and gave her the branches of palm with his own hands. At last she was sure. She knew that she must wait no longer. She had been called.

At midnight of that same Palm Sunday, when all the household were asleep, Clare, with her aunt as companion, stole quietly down a back

staircase and out through a closed-up door of her father's house. It was the Door of the Dead, and was only used for funerals, in accordance with the Italian custom. Only those went out that way who were never to come back, and Clare had made her choice. Through the sleeping town she went, and out across the fields and through the olive groves to the little church of Portiuncula, which has been called the cradle of the Franciscan Orders. There St. Francis and the Friars were waiting for her with flickering torches, after having said the midnight Office. There Clare put off her rich robes, her jewels and her silks; she clothed herself with sackcloth, with a rope as a girdle, and put her bare feet in wooden sandals. Her beautiful hair was cut off, and her head was covered with a black veil, and kneeling there at the same altar where St. Francis, only a few years before, had finally and decisively heard the clear call of Jesus and had known at last what it was that he must do, Clare gave herself to her Lord. "St. Francis read to her the words of Jesus to his disciples, and she vowed to conform her life to them", while her aunt and the brothers knelt around her in prayer.

Early the next morning St. Francis sent her, for greater security, to the Benedictine convent at Bostia. Even there she was not safe. The step which Clare had taken was heroic; none knew better than she the persecutions to which she would be subjected by her family, the efforts which they would make to force her to come back. She had not long to wait. On Holy Monday her father appeared, and made every effort by arguments and expostulations and threats to induce her to return, but in vain. Clare remained firm. She knew, too, in her heart, however much her father might storm, that the women of her family—her mother, her sisters and her aunt—were in deepest sympathy with the step which she had taken. Finally her father, in anger, laid violent hands upon her and tried to drag her away by force. Clare clung to the altar with one hand, while with the other she threw back her black veil and showed her head shorn of its beautiful tresses, and only then did her father realize that both this step and her determination were irrevocable.

Two weeks after Clare had left her father's house, her younger sister Agnes announced to her parents that she was about to join Clare, and that she, too, wished to forsake the world for the cloister. Her father was furious, and a family council was called to consider what should be done. What was to be the end of all this, to what extremes of conduct would this wild movement lead which the son of Bernadone, the merchant, had set on foot! While her relatives deliberated, Agnes made her escape, and Clare received her, and leading her to the altar offered her to the Lord. Close behind Agnes came her uncle, a fierce man, with an escort of twelve men-at-arms, who had been sent by the family to force her to return. Agnes refused to listen either to threats or entreaties, and, seeing her thus obdurate, her uncle, in a towering

passion, ordered his soldiers to take her away by force. It is said that they dragged and pushed her, resisting at every step, down a steep mountain path, so that the rocks and stones were covered with her blood. In her extremity Agnes cried aloud—"Clare, help me! Help me, my sister, that I be not taken away from Jesus!" In an agony Clare prayed, and again help came,—a sign. The slight body of Agnes became suddenly as heavy as lead, so that the soldiers were in no wise able to move it. They called to some peasants who were working in a field near by to come and help them, but even with their united efforts it was impossible to lift her from the ground. Finally, in an extreme of anger, the uncle drew his sword. As he raised it in the air to strike her, a sudden and sharp pain shot through his extended arm, and it became powerless, and the sword dropped to the ground. Terrified at this sight, and by the miracle, the soldiers fled, and Clare, raising Agnes, led her back to the convent, and thereafter they were not disturbed. A few days later, Agnes made her vows to St. Francis, and he, realizing that they must have a refuge where they might receive those other women whom he knew were to join them, gave to them the little grey Chapel of St. Damian, set among the wild olive trees and half covered with flowering plants and vines, where he himself had made his great beginning. No doubt he recalled that when he was rebuilding St. Damian's, moved by a power he did not then understand, he called to some peasants who were passing by, and said, "Come, help me, in the work of this monastery, for here shall devout women one day dwell, and by them shall our heavenly Father be glorified throughout the length and breadth of his church." There, at St. Damian's, the Order of the Poor Clares came into being, and there, later on, Clare and Agnes were joined by their mother Ortolana, by their sister Beatrice, and by several of their nieces, the daughters of their oldest sister, as well as by many other women of the families of Assisi and of the neighbouring towns and cities.

Then their Rule was given to them by St. Francis, and this Rule probably differed very little from that of the Friars Minor except in so far as it provided that they should live enclosed. There Clare remained to the day of her death, forty-two years later. In the earlier days of the Order it is probable that the rule of absolute enclosure was not strictly enforced, for it is clear that at first the sisters greatly helped the Friars Minor in visiting and caring for the sick, and in nursing the lepers who came to live in huts near St. Damian's. Certain it is that at first St. Francis and St. Clare laboured together outwardly in such works of mercy, and there is a legend which is still told in Assisi of one winter's day when they were both visiting a convent at Spello, a little town seven or eight miles from Assisi, and started the homeward journey, together on foot. The Master walked with them, as always, but St. Francis was disturbed in his heart with the fear of gossiping tongues, and bade Clare take the upper path along the hill-side, while he himself took the road through

the valley. Clare obediently set out, although not understanding the reason for this parting of the ways, and after a little, when the paths converged, she leaned over and called gently down to St. Francis to inquire when she should again join him. St. Francis replied, "When the roses bloom on Mount Subasio", which indeed seemed very remote on that bleak winter's day. Clare walked on, wondering, and as she walked, the snow began to melt along her path, and lo! she came upon a rose bush in full bloom. With joy in her heart she picked the flowers, and holding them in her arms, she ran lightly down the hill-side to show them to St. Francis, and together they finished the journey to Assisi. Legend or no, what better proof than this that in those early days Clare worked with St. Francis? May we not believe, also, that this work together was ordained and ordered by him who was their Lord and Master?

But as the Order of the Poor Clares grew in numbers, the rule of enclosure was strictly kept, and the sisters never went outside their convent and their garden. This garden was large, covering several acres, and was surrounded by high walls, which enclosed as well a patch of woodland. They followed the rule of absolute poverty which St. Francis had given them, finding in their freedom from worldly possessions the freedom, too, to turn within and to find there more fully, more completely, the Master whom they followed. They had no money in those early days, and the dowries which certain of the sisters brought with them were given at once to the poor; they would not accept property as possessions, in spite of the utmost pressure from Rome to induce them to do so. They lived in rough cells; they were constantly in prayer; they occupied themselves with spinning thread, with embroidery and fine sewing, and they made altar linen and many beautiful vestments. Certain of the brothers were delegated by St. Francis to provide them with food and the necessities of life, and these they obtained for them by begging from house to house. There is a story that one day, when the sisters were in need of oil, they set a large empty jar outside the convent wall, and sent a messenger to St. Francis to ask that the oil might be supplied them. Now it so happened that the Friar, whose duty it was that day to provide for the sisters, delayed for a long time, for some reason or other, in going to fetch the jar. Finally he arrived at the door of the convent, and looking into the jar, was amazed to find it full of oil. Indignant at what he regarded as a waste of his time, which he thought might have been better employed in other duties, he went back and told all to St. Francis, and only then did he understand that the jar had been filled by other than human hands, and that in this miracle he must see, as well, a rebuke for his own tardiness.

Many are the stories of St. Clare herself, of her life and of her miracles. We hear of a miraculous cure wrought by her in the case of a man who was possessed by a devil. Clare, after praying and making

the sign of the cross over him, bade him sleep for a little while on the spot where she usually prayed; he did so, and awoke cured. We read of how she repulsed the Saracens, when they had not only captured Assisi itself, but had even swarmed within the confines of St. Damian's and had invaded the cloister. The sisters, terror-stricken, rushed in tears to their Mother. Clare, although she was ill at the time, caused herself to be assisted to an open window overlooking the garden, and, standing there in full view, prayed for help, and again her prayer was answered, for she heard a voice say to her, "I will always defend thee." On the instant, fear spread through the ranks of the invaders, and immediately they fled from out the cloister and the garden, and never ceased in their flight until they had left the city of Assisi far behind them. Of these miracles, there is no end. They are charmingly told by Brother Thomas of Celano of the Order of Friars Minor. Among them he includes a miracle of the multiplication of bread. He says, "There was once only a single loaf of bread in the monastery, and the time of hunger and the hour for eating had come. Having called the refectorian, the Saint bade her divide the loaf and send half of it to the Friars and keep the rest for the sisters. Of this remaining half she ordered fifty pieces to be made, according to the number of the Ladies, and placed before them at the table of Poverty. When the devout daughter made answer that in this case the ancient miracles of Christ would be necessary in order that such a small piece of bread might be divided into fifty parts, the mother replied, 'Do what I tell thee, daughter, and trust what I say.' When the daughter hastened to fulfil the mother's commands, the mother hastened to direct her pious sighs to her Christ for her daughters. By the Divine favour the little piece of bread increased in the hands of her who broke it and an abundant portion was provided for each one of the Community."

So we must picture St. Clare, beautiful and gracious, living among her ladies in gentleness and humility, able through her great love and nearness to the unseen world of the real, and through her life of prayer, to bring to pass these things, and many others like them, which the world calls miracles. We must picture her caring for her flowers—she called herself "the little plant of the most blessed Father Francis"—in her own tiny garden on the terrace, and singing as she worked, for like Francis she was gay and joyous, while around her bloomed lilies, symbols of purity; violets, of humility; and roses, of love for God and man. We must picture her going quietly through the convent in the early morning hours, "lighting the lamps and ringing the bells for prayers before her Community arose." We see her caring for some sick sister, washing the feet of the serving women, attending to the needs of her ladies in the refectory and refusing to partake herself until they had all eaten. Truly, Abbess as she was, she lived among them as one that serveth! And we must picture her again late at night, after all were asleep, steal-

ing softly through the corridors and the cells to see that all was well, perhaps covering some sleeper who was cold.

But we must see her, too, in still another light, in her quiet and seclusion on the hill-side amidst the olive trees. The sterner, heroic qualities of the girl had grown and developed. St. Francis's disciple had become a woman exceedingly brilliant, highly intellectual, forceful and full of power. We must picture her as well in the daily instruction of the sisters; busy with new foundations of the Order all the world over; in correspondence with Pope and Cardinals in regard to these foundations and her Rule; receiving frequently messengers and emissaries from Rome, sometimes even the Pope himself. Receiving, too, almost daily, those who came to see her from all over Italy, for the fame of the holiness and the goodness of the Poor Clares had spread abroad throughout the whole land, and the influence of their prayers and the power working through them from this communion reached out and drew to them from far and near all those who needed counsel and help and inspiration. For there had been a profound revolution in the lives of all classes of people; hundreds had been filled with the desire to emulate Clare and her ladies. The rich and noble gave away their possessions to the poor and built chapels and retreats for themselves. Many who were unable to join Clare became members of the Third Order of St. Francis, while others tried to live under a rule in their own homes. Truly did Clare, enclosed as she was, begin to enlighten the whole world!

Such was her life throughout the forty-two years at St. Damian's, and her strength and her power and her loveliness continually increased: a life of continual communion. At night, "Clare remained watchful and unwearied in prayer, so that while sleep lay hold of the others she might by stealth, as it were, receive the visits of the Divine whisper." By day her communion with her Lord was unbroken; each act was done for him, each thought offered for him. The years brought illness and infirmities of the body, so that the strength given her was indeed made increasingly perfect through weakness, until finally the end came. As she lay, surrounded by her weeping ladies, she was heard speaking softly to her own soul. "'Go forth', she said, 'without fear. For thou hast a good guide for thy journey. Go forth', she said, 'for He who created thee hath sanctified thee and, protecting thee always, loveth thee with a love as tender as that of a mother for her son. Blessed be Thou, Lord,' she said, 'who hast created me.' When one of the Sisters asked her to whom she was speaking, Clare replied, 'I am speaking to my blessed soul.' Nor was that glorious guide far distant. For, turning to a certain daughter, she asked, 'O daughter, dost thou see the King of Glory whom I behold?'"

Six hundred years later, when her tomb was opened, they found her, scarcely changed, in the coarse brown habit of the Order, with the

Book of the Rule in her hand, and it is said that the flowers which lay about her still preserved their fragrance.

A story of humility and of poverty, of a great love and a great influence. For Clare, humility found its most complete expression in poverty; freedom from possessions brought inner freedom; having nothing, she possessed all things. She gave herself, and was free to give in return; few women have so influenced the life of their time. Surely some measure of such influence must be possible for each one of us, in these later days, if we truly desire it: possible for all those who are enclosed, as Clare was, hemmed in with all kinds of household duties and cares, with family ties. It must be a question of living the life, of doing each little duty of every day as perfectly as we can, as an offering to the Master, as the immediate thing which he is asking at that particular moment of time to have done for him. It must be a question of holding in detachment those possessions which we may have; of looking upon wealth as being in trust for others; of freedom from *things* that we may be free to find, as did Francis and Clare, the inner realities and the real values. When we have laid hold on these, we can give, and others who need what we have to offer will come to us, as they came from afar to Clare, drawn by a spirit of true devotion and of sacrifice that transcends in its gifts and in its rewards all that we can ask or think.

We, too—each one of us—can walk along life's way with something at least of that same humility of spirit, that fire of love, that gaiety of heart that comes from true self-surrender. Perhaps we may become conscious, too, that One is walking with us by the way, if only our eyes will cease to be holden,—trying to speak with us, as he did with Francis and with Clare, when we talk together and are sad. But we shall not know it save through that same spirit of prayer, carried into all daily life and all living. Vision and strength can only be possible through that same close communion with him, through the lifting up of our hearts to him, through the receiving of him into the quiet of our hearts. He called it that good part which shall not be taken away, this way of contemplation and of prayer. It is the same to-day, in all the rush and turmoil of modern life, as it has been throughout the centuries since he first said this.

> "For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound with gold chains about the feet of God."

We, too, by our prayer, by our communion with the Master, are bound by living chains to the feet of him who died that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly.

C. R. A.

# LODGE DIALOGUES

## IV

NIGHT had come—night with a million stars. It is the hour of faith, of the hidden life, when the secrets of the heart are revealed. The body lies asleep. On the other side of sleep the soul wakes, threading its way through the mazes of the mind to temporary freedom and calm, readjusting itself to realities.

At these heights the stars are close; one could almost touch them with the fingers of an outstretched hand it seems; and they are friendly, too, in their nearness,—not austere and distant in their purity and obedience as so often they appear from below. Here they shine from the depth of blue which throbs in unison with the great Heart behind. One can feel that Heart.

We had come a long, long way, and the Littlest One and I lay and gazed at them. Not far off the Finger Peak pointed upward, piercing the blue.

"Big Brother says they are the candles of the angels"; the sweet, childish treble was hushed in tone, "but how slowly the angels walk then! I suppose not to joggle", he said.

"They move in Eternity", I answered, "where they live, and with God's patience which they serve, mercifully for us, since we who live in time, can sustain the hope of not being left behind."

"If the world is round", he continued, "might it not be quicker to walk about the other way and meet them?"

"Some people have tried that, but in the dark they lost their way and fell into the abyss. It is a dangerous chance. Not one in a thousand succeeds. It is best to come here to gaze at them, and then to walk in their light. We never can lose them then."

After a pause he asked, "When you go back, how do the stars look from there?"

"Like courage and fortitude, dear child, like endurance and patience and strength; like belief in the Father's love, and trust in his wisdom, and obedience to his will. They are the lights of faith."

"Where did the light come from to make them?—I know", he added quickly, "from the eyes of the Devas, who made them a present to God."

M.

# AKHNATON THE "HERETIC" PHARAOH OF EGYPT

II

THE MIDDLE KINGDOM (*continued*)

ANOTHER example of the painful re-awakening of the men of the Middle Kingdom, immediately following the dark period, is a remarkable papyrus which describes a colloquy, one might call it a dispute, between a man and his own soul,—a man who feels that he has a just grievance against society, which in consequence he despises. It is an early protest of the individual against what he considers unjust social conditions, the sort of thing we should never have found in the Old Kingdom. But it takes us much farther than did the Harper, because it maintains that, while we may know little in detail of what happens to us after death, this is no reason for unbridled indulgence now. We can only give extracts, for the dialogue is long and much of it very obscure. The early part is given over to an enumeration of the miseries caused by the evils of the day, by false friends and by cruel enemies. But for all that, healing is not to be found in intemperance and self-indulgence, as the Harper would have us think. Death is far preferable to a life of debauchery, and should, indeed, be looked on as a happy release.

Death is before me today
(Like) the recovery of a sick man,
Like going forth into a garden after sickness.

Death is before me today
Like the odor of myrrh,
Like sitting under the sail on a windy day.

Death is before me today
Like the odor of lotus flowers,
Like sitting on the shore of drunkenness.

Death is before me today
Like the course of the freshet,
Like the return of a man from the war-galley to his house.

Death is before me today
Like the clearing of the sky,
Like a man (fowling therein toward) that which he knew not.

Death is before me today
As a man longs to see his house
When he has spent years in captivity.[4]

It does not occur to this mournful individual to fall to with a will and help to better social conditions,—that was to come later; the world had not yet waked up to the possibility of doing this. This man only longs for liberation from his miseries, sighing to himself:

He who is yonder
Shall stand in the celestial barque,
Causing that the choicest of the offerings there be given
to the temples.

He who is yonder
Shall be a wise man who has not been repelled,
Praying to Ra when he speaks.[5]

While the Harper saw emancipation only in living for the moment, this despairing man sees it in seeking "those who are beyond"—the dead. He is fortunately typical only of a short period of the thinking world of that day, but that he could exist at all is significant.

Side by side with him we find the less egotistical reflections of a priest of Heliopolis, who bewails social conditions as intensely as does the Misanthrope, but not on his own account; his concern is for society itself, which is its own worst enemy: "Righteousness is cast out, iniquity is in the midst of the council-hall. The plans of the gods are violated, their dispositions are disregarded. The land is in distress, mourning is in every place, towns and districts are in lamentation. All men alike are under wrongs; as for respect, an end is made of it." [6] But he is no more successful in finding a solution than were the other two.

Even the King does not escape the general despondency. Amenemhat I, the great founder of the XIIth Dynasty, solemnly admonishes his son and successor, Senusert I, exhorting him to put his faith in no man. Late in life the attempted assassination of the King by his most trusted subjects, had so shaken his confidence in human nature, and had left so deep and terrible a scar on his soul, that his short utterance is full of bitterness. In a few dramatic lines, he has left us a vivid picture of that dark midnight scene in the palace, when the conspiracy, kept secret till that moment, bursts in all its fury on the old and unsuspecting King.

It was after the evening meal, and night was come. I took for myself an hour of ease. I lay down upon my bed, for I was weary. My heart began to wander. I slept. And lo! weapons were brandished, and there was conference concerning me. I acted as the serpent of the desert. [He remained quiet but watchful.]

I awoke to fight; I was alone. I found one struck down, it was

[4] Breasted's translation.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

the captain of the guard. Had I received quickly the arms from his hand, I had driven back the dastards by smiting around. But he was not a brave man on that night, nor could I fight alone; an occasion of prowess cometh not to one surprised. Thus was I.[7]

He then sternly counsels his son, with evident, perhaps pardonable, disillusionment:

Hearken to that which I say to thee,
That thou mayest be King of the earth,
That thou mayest be ruler of the lands,
That thou mayest increase good.
Harden thyself against all subordinates.
The people give heed to him who terrorizes them.
Approach them not alone,
Fill not thy heart with a brother,
Know not a friend,
Nor make for thyself intimates,
Wherein there is no end.
When thou sleepest, guard for thyself thine own heart;
For a man has no people
In the day of evil.
I gave to the beggar, I nourished the orphan;
I admitted the insignificant as well as him who was of great account.
But he who ate my food made insurrection;
He to whom I gave my hand aroused fear therein.[8]

It would be an unpardonable injustice to the men of the Middle Kingdom, however, to imagine that the profound and negative dejection so pronounced in the Song of the Harper and in the lamentations of the Misanthrope and of the Heliopolitan priest, and even in Amenemhat I, was in any sense universal or of long duration. Egypt had suffered much during the dark period after the downfall of the Old Kingdom, and, as we have already pointed out, most of the despondent writing of the new era was in the early days before the complete restoration of order, and while men's hearts were still sore. They had lost the power which was the heritage of the men of the Old Kingdom, of making the particular subservient to the collective, of merging diversity into unity. An undue emphasis was put on their individual selves, dulling their spiritual perception. Their minds could no longer, as in the Old Kingdom, turn rapturously outwards, losing themselves in the glories of the visible universe, seeing, with the eyes of the soul, that universe as but the reflection of the hidden and still more glorious kingdom beyond, where the spirit dwells eternal,—seeing, also, man in his true relation to it. Instead of this, their bewildered minds turned inwards upon themselves, making their individual selves the measure of truth. And yet, with it all, there was a blind, a piteous reaching out and upwards towards better things, a struggling against the dark forces, which saves this period from being

[7] Gunn's translation.
[8] Breasted's translation.

completely decadent. We have but to sympathise with the yearning in all their references to their illustrious ancestors, "the gods who were aforetime", "the glorious departed", to appreciate their sad comparisons between the evils of the present and the dignity of the past, and to know that they were grievously dissatisfied with themselves. It had long before been said by one of the Wise Men of the Old Kingdom: "That which destroyeth a vision is the veil over it." The men of the early part of the Middle Kingdom allowed their vision to be dulled by the thick veil of personality which shut them in and all but smothered them.

Presently, however, we come upon a sharp counter-current, an entirely new spirit,—a spirit of a strong and healthy recognition of the immutable, the eternal values of life. What if the resting places of the dead, so carefully planned, so strongly built, have been desecrated! What matters it if nothing mortal remains sacred in a fleeting world? Character, at least, can and should be made permanent, and it is character, in the end, which will bring about the regeneration of society, and triumph over death. This, of course, as we have seen, was also the point of view of the men of the Old Kingdom, only they, being less labyrinthine in their methods of approach, reached this solution with fewer difficulties.

A striking example can be found in the scathing arraignment of society by Ipuwer, to us an obscure personage, but evidently a sage of high repute in his day. His grief is intense that the glory of the old world has departed; he censures himself severely for not having sooner made an effort to stem the tide: "Would that I had uttered my voice at that time, that it might save me from the suffering wherein I am. Woe is me for the misery of this time." But with consuming energy he exhorts men to renewed effort to purify their lives, and to "destroy the enemies of the August Residence" (of the Pharaoh), assuring them that with this renewed effort will come again among them the Perfect Ruler. "It is said he is the Shepherd of all men. There is no evil in his heart. When his herds are few, he passeth the day to gather them together, their hearts being fevered." It would seem that Ipuwer is calling up before the eyes of men the forgotten image of Ra, the Ideal King, the first Divine Ruler of Egypt, and as Breasted, whose translation is given, points out, one compares it instinctively with the later Hebraic predictions of the coming of the Messiah.

One characteristic form of literature of this period, and of which there is not a little, is that in which we find laid down very definite rules for good conduct, wholesome and sane living, moderation, the practice of cheerfulness, and, above all, moral earnestness,—in fact the sort of sound advice which a father would give a son, knowing that it would help to build up, for the younger generation, a healthy and happy state. It is in the "Wisdom of Ptahhotep" that we find perhaps the best known example of this. These "Instructions" are found many times repeated in XIIth. Dynasty papyri, for they were held in such high esteem that they were apparently widely circulated, and were taught in the schools

and given as writing exercises. Part of them were said to have come down from the Old Kingdom, being the "Sayings" of a Wise Man of the Vth. Dynasty. The "Instructions" are purely ethical in character, having little if any religious flavour, but they are full of a bed-rock common-sense and a ripe knowledge of the pitfalls to which poor human nature is exposed,—all of which inspires deep respect. In them there is also a kindly tolerance, a sort of whimsicality, and flashes of quiet humour which are altogether human and delightful.

> If thou findest an arguer talking, thy fellow (equal), one that is within thy reach, keep not silence when he saith aught that is evil; so shalt thou be wiser than he.
>
> If thou find an arguer talking, a poor man, that is to say not thine equal, be not scornful toward him because he is lowly. Let him alone; then shall he confound himself. Question him not to please thine heart, neither pour out thy wrath upon him that is before thee; it is shameful to confuse a mean mind. If thou be about to do that which is in thine heart, overcome it as a thing rejected of princes.
>
> Cause not fear among men, . . . live in the house of kindliness.
>
> If thou be among the guests of a man that is greater than thou, accept that which he giveth thee, putting it to thy lips. If thou look at him that is before thee, thine host, pierce him not with many glances. It is abhorred of the soul to stare at him.
>
> If thou be lowly, serve a wise man, that all thy actions may be good before the God. If thou hast known a man of none account that hath been advanced in rank, be not haughty toward him on account of that which thou knowest concerning him; but honour him that hath been advanced, according to that which he hath become.
>
> If thou be among people, make for thyself love, the beginning and end of the heart.
>
> If thou be a leader, be gracious when thou harkenest unto the speech of a suppliant. Let him not hesitate to deliver himself of that which he hath thought to tell thee; but be desirous of removing his injury. Let him speak freely, that the thing for which he hath come to thee may be done, . . . a well taught heart hearkeneth readily.
>
> If thou desire that thine actions may be good, save thyself from all malice, and beware of the quality of covetousness, which is a grievous inner malady. Let it not chance that thou fall thereinto. It setteth at variance fathers-in-law and the kinsmen of the daughter-in-law; it sundereth the wife and the husband.
>
> Repeat not extravagant speech, neither listen thereto; for it is the utterance of a body heated by wrath. When such speech is repeated to thee, hearken not thereto, look to the ground. Speak not regarding it, that he that is before thee may know wisdom.
>
> If thou be powerful, make thyself to be honoured for knowledge and gentleness. Speak with authority, that is, not as if following injunctions, for he that is humble, when highly placed, falleth into errors. Exalt not thine heart that it be not brought low. Be not silent, but beware of interruption and of answering words with heat. Put it far from thee; control thyself. The

wrathful heart speaketh fiery words; it darteth out at the man of peace that approacheth, stopping his path.

Set out after a violent quarrel; be at peace with him that is hostile unto thee, his opponent. It is such souls that make love to grow.

If thou be great, after being of none account, and hast gotten riches after squalor, being foremost in these in the city, and hast knowledge concerning useful matters, so that promotion has come to thee; then swathe not thine heart in thine head, for thou art become the steward of the endowments of God. Thou art not the last; another shall be thine equal, and to him shall come the like fortune and station.

If thou wouldest seek out the nature of a friend, ask it not of any companion of his; but pass a time with him alone, that thou injure not his affairs. Debate with him after a season; test his heart in an occasion of speech. When he hath told thee his past life, he hath made an opportunity that thou mayest either be ashamed for him or be familiar with him. Be not reserved with him when he openeth speech, neither answer him after a scornful manner. Withdraw not thyself from him, neither interrupt him whose matter is not yet ended, whom it is possible to benefit.

Be thy heart overflowing but refrain thy speech.

Be not covetous toward thy neighbours; for with a gentle man praise availeth more than might.

Let thy face be bright what time thou livest.[9]

We have quoted Ptahhotep at some length because of his great importance in XIIth. Dynasty literature. In the "Installation of the Vizier", we find the same insistence on honesty and fair play, only, as is natural in this case, it emphasizes more the official obligations, than the duties of the private citizen.

Forget not to judge justice. It is an abomination of the God to show partiality. This is the teaching, therefore do thou accordingly. Look upon him who is known to thee, like him who is unknown to thee; and him who is near the King like him who is far from his house.

Be not wroth against a man wrongfully; but be thou wroth at that at which one should be wroth.

Behold, it becomes the arrogant (literally the "violent hearted"), that the King should love the timid more than the arrogant.

Behold, men expect the doing of justice in the procedure of the Vizier. Behold, that is its (justice's) customary law since the God.[10]

We must not fail to note the reiteration that justice has been the law in Egypt since the time when Ra ruled on earth, and that the people, therefore, look for justice at the hands of the King's highest and most trusted servant,—the Vizier.

And when at last we turn to the mortuary texts of the Middle Kingdom, if we have any remaining doubts of the high ideals of this

[9] Gunn's translation.
[10] Breasted's translation.

age, they are quickly dispelled. We read with profound admiration the list of virtues which the dead must present to their judges before they can be said to have earned an immortal life. Honesty, truthfulness, uprightness, purity in speech and act, the sanctity of the family ties, strict filling of all social obligations. In referring to the moral code of the Egyptians of this time, Chabas says: "None of the Christian virtues is forgotten in it; piety, charity, self-command in word and action, chastity, the protection of the weak, benevolence towards the humble, deference to superiors, respect for property in its minutest details,—all is expressed there." We find a typical example of the ethical standards of the Middle Kingdom in the well known XIIth. Dynasty tomb of Ameni (a noble, and probably the governor of his nome), at Benihassan. The words are those which the deceased is to utter before his judges:

> Not a little child did I injure. Not a widow did I oppress. Not a herdsman did I ill-treat. There was no beggar in my days; no one starved in my time. And when the years of famine came, I ploughed all the lands of the province to its northern and southern boundaries, feeding its inhabitants and providing their food. There was no starving person in it, and I made the widow to thrive as though she possessed a husband.

There were forty-two sins to which the departed soul had to plead "not guilty". If he proved his innocence he could then pass on as "true of speech". In the Middle Kingdom (as indeed had already been the case in the Old Kingdom), there is so much interweaving of the cult of Osiris with that of Ra when we approach the realms of the dead, and it is such a vast subject, that we cannot even touch on it now. We must not forget, however, that it is originally from the solar theology that we get the first glimmerings of moral obligations, as we have already seen in the Pyramid Texts,[11] and we find them continued now in the Middle Kingdom, and Ra himself, the Ideal King (as Ipuwer showed him to be, and as we find it stated in the "Installation of the Vizier"), is the one who stimulates to ever renewed efforts towards righteousness and justice. Thus we read, "that good which came out of the mouth of Ra himself, 'speak truth, do truth, for it is great, it is mighty, it is enduring. The reward thereof shall find thee, and shall follow thee into blessedness hereafter.' " [12]

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[11] Breasted says: "There can be no doubt that in the Old Kingdom the sovereignty of Ra had resulted in attributing to him the moral requirements laid upon the dead in the hereafter, and that in the surviving literature of that age he is chiefly the righteous God rather than Osiris. . . . The later rapid growth of ethical teaching in the Osiris faith and the assumption of the rôle of judge by Osiris is not yet discernible in the Pyramid Age, and the development which made these elements so prominent in the Middle Kingdom took place in the obscure period after the close of the Pyramid Age. Contrary to the conclusion generally accepted at present, it was the Sun God, therefore, who was the earliest champion of moral worthiness and the great judge in the hereafter. A thousand years later Osiris . . . emerged as the great moral judge . . . To these later conditions from which modern students have drawn their impressions, the current conclusion regarding the early moral supremacy of Osiris is due. The greater age of the Solar faith in this as in other particulars is, however, perfectly clear."

[12] From "The Eloquent Peasant."

It has been pointed out that the Pyramid Texts contain many magical formulæ; but we now find them in vastly increasing numbers. One of the most striking changes of the times is the growing complexity of the dangers which the departed soul must encounter in the next world; and the belief in the power of the spoken word, on behalf of the dead, has made great progress since the time of the Old Kingdom.[13] These charms, together with very beautiful prayers and invocations, were written for the use and protection of the deceased on the inside of his coffin. As we know, these "Coffin Texts" of the Middle Kingdom formed the nucleus of what became so familiar to the Egyptian of a later time, that is, "The Chapters of the Going Forth by Day," as le Page Renouf and some others translate it. Naville says he "would prefer 'Coming Out of the Day'—the day being a period of a man's life, having its morning and its evening." Rawlinson translates it: "The Manifestation of Light" or the "Chapters Revealing Light to the Soul." Today it is commonly known to us as the "Book of the Dead", the modern name given by Lepsius, who attempted no translation of the ancient title. The charms used in the "Coffin Texts" were looked upon as of the greatest importance to the lonely soul in his journey to the next world, and at this early period their motive was in general a perfectly sincere one,—if the soul was impure the incantation could not protect him. But as time went on, much of the early sincerity fell away, while the belief in the inherent power of the charms, no matter what the worthiness or the unworthiness of the deceased, remained; and it was this trust in their invariable efficacy which enabled a crafty and self-seeking priesthood of a later day to work on the feelings of the people and to commercialize what had originally been a very pure element in their religion. To quote again from Breasted: "It is difficult for the modern mind to understand how completely the belief in magic penetrated the whole substance of life." But this is not true of all modern thinkers. Madame Blavatsky writes: "Magic was considered a divine science which led to a participation in the attributes of Divinity itself";[14] and again: "for notwithstanding that it is occult and unknown to our scholars, who deny its possibilities, magic is still a science."[15] So if, in reading the "Coffin Texts", we feel that we have to dig and delve in a mass of what, to our average ignorance of today, seems an endless maze of unintelligible semi-crude writings, of spells very difficult to understand, and therefore still more difficult to translate, let us remember that these seemingly crude forms in reality hide a long-forgotten science of the most far reaching kind, whether most of us understand it or not. In any case, we are amply rewarded by the nuggets of pure gold which we come across in the shape of prayers and exhortations.

[13] "The spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in, by modern 'sages'." *Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. 307.

[14] *Isis Unveiled*, vol. I, p. 25.

[15] *Ibid*, vol. I, p. 244.

"That which saves the 'Book of the Dead' itself from being exclusively a magical *vade mecum* for use in the hereafter," says Breasted, "is its elaboration of the ancient idea of the moral judgment, and its evident appreciation of the burden of conscience." But this statement, it seems to us, is far too limited; for when one has subtracted all the magic, and all the moral judgment and the emphasis on conscience, there still remain the adoration and praise found in the hymns and prayers, and these can by no means be overlooked or set aside. Most of the larger papyri of the "Book of the Dead"[16] open with a hymn to Ra, which can be taken as but one example of this raising of the heart in a pure outpouring of worship:

> Homage to thee, O Ra, at thy beauteous rising. Thou risest, thou risest; thou shinest, thou shinest at the dawn. Thou art King of the Gods, and the Maati Goddesses embrace thee. The company of the Gods praise thee at sunrise and at sunset. Thou sailest over the heights of heaven and thy heart is glad. Thy Morning Boat meeteth thy Evening Boat with fair winds. . . . Thou art Horus of the Eastern and the Western skies. . . . O thou Only One, O thou Perfect One, O thou who art eternal, who art never weak, whom no mighty one can abase; none hath dominion over the things which appertain to thee. Homage to thee in thy characters of Horus, Tum and Khepera, thou Great Hawk, who makest man to rejoice by thy beautiful face. When thou risest men and women live. Thou renewest thy youth, and dost set thyself in the place where thou wast yesterday. O Divine Youth, who art self-created, I cannot comprehend thee. Thou art the lord of heaven and earth, and didst create beings celestial and beings terrestrial. Thou art the One God, who camest into being in the beginning of time. Thou didst create the earth, and man, thou didst make the sky and the celestial river Hep; thou didst make the waters and didst give life unto all that therein is. Thou hast knit together the mountains, thou hast made mankind and the beasts of the field to come into being, and hast made the heavens and the earth. . . . O thou Divine Youth, thou heir of everlastingness, self-begotten and self-born, One, Might, of myriad forms and aspects, Prince of An [Heliopolis], Lord of Eternity, Everlasting Ruler, the Company of the Gods rejoice in thee. As thou risest thou growest greater; thy rays are upon all faces. Thou art unknowable, and no tongue can describe thy similitude; thou existest alone. Millions of years have passed over the world, I cannot tell the number of those through which thou hast passed. Thou journeyest through spaces requiring millions of years to pass over in one little moment of time, and then thou settest and dost make an end of the hours.[17]

In the "Coffin Texts" we find a distinct increase in the democratization of the hereafter, as compared with the Pyramid Texts. In the

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[16] It is well nigh impossible, and indeed inadvisable, to draw too sharp a line of cleavage between the "Coffin Texts" and the "Book of the Dead," as many of the chapters of the latter are merely elaborations of those found in the former, and in many cases both are directly descended from the Pyramid Texts.

[17] E. A. Wallis Budge's translation.

latter we saw that the Pharaoh alone was mentioned, and we have stated what would seem to have been the reason, but the "Coffin Texts" are enlarged to include aspirants of varying degrees, such as Amamu, a man in private life without any official position whatever; Sapti, a lady of the nobility; Sena, an overseer of the palace of the King; Menthuhotep, a priest, and countless others. This, of course, was a natural result, as well as a reflection of the existing social conditions, the rise of the nobility and to a certain extent of the middle classes, to which we have already drawn attention.

In reviewing the Middle Kingdom then, and in summing up our impressions of it, we find that, like most many-sided things, whether individuals or epochs, it is full of apparent contradictions, and, indeed, we could hardly find two states of mind divided by a greater gulf than that which separates the Song of the Harper from the splendid opening lines of the now famous seventeenth chapter of the "Book of the Dead",—that chapter which already in the "Coffin Texts" was much in use, and which, in fact, is almost certainly a survival from Pyramid times:

I am He who closeth, and He who openeth, and I am but One.[18]
I am Ra at His first appearance,
I am the Great God, Self- Produced.
. . . . . .
I am Yesterday, and I know Tomorrow.

HETEP EN NETER.

*(To be continued)*

[18] Le Page Renouf says: "It would be difficult for us to imagine that the very remarkable opening" [meaning the *first line* quoted above] "of the chapter, is an addition. Yet it is unknown to the primitive recension on the wall of Horhotep's tomb, though found everywhere else" [Horhotep's tomb being the earliest in which this chapter is found]. "The texts, however, which contain it, do not agree."

To the words: "I am He who closeth, and He who openeth, and I am but One," Renouf very aptly parallels: "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord." Apocalypse, I, 8.

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*Thus, from the sublime spirit of the ancients, there flow into the minds of those who imitate them, certain emanations, like clouds of vapour from the cleft rocks in holy shrines; and these inspire even the least gifted with the enthusiasm and greatness of others.*—LONGINUS.

# EVOLUTION AND DAILY LIVING

THE study of natural history, or in its broader sense, biology, is popularly conceived to be of little value in so far as "questions of the day" are concerned. The mind of the public vaguely relegates biology to the limbo of unpractical subjects, a career for those who are relatively unfit to do anything better, a hobby for those who have exceptional opportunity or much leisure. While this body of opinion is generous enough to grant learning and considerable intellectual capacity to biologists, it is held a pity that such talents and accomplishments cannot be turned to more fruitful fields of endeavour. The writer, primarily a biologist, is compelled to admit that there is some weight to this criticism. It is quite true that biologists have little to contribute of value to these "problems of life", which are now the theme of discussion on every side. To say, however, that biology has no bearing upon them, is a totally different and a false proposition.

It may well seem somewhat surprising that the study of plants and animals has any bearing upon the weighty problems, political, social, and economic, which at present are crowding upon the peoples of the world, crying for a solution. These weighty questions have existed, in one form or another, ever since civilization came into being, but they are periodically forgotten in eras of tranquil prosperity. Such an era has recently come to a close, the problems have been rediscovered, and a people, whose vanity is greatly tickled thereby, fondly imagines that the discovery is two-thirds of the battle, and that proper laws or treaties drawn up by sufficiently learned commissions will administer the *coup de grace.* That this attitude is even greater folly than the search for the Philosopher's Stone or the Fountain of Youth in the Middle Ages, and that it is founded on an utter disregard of some hard and unpalatable facts, is one of the contributions which biology is fully able to make.

A sufficiently careful and honest reflection upon the known facts in the plant and animal worlds, leads to one obvious deduction, namely that a fundamental principle of design actuates all the activities of nature. The theories of chance and the fortuitous combinations of atoms, by which the materialists of two generations ago sought to explain even universal phenomena and their origin, are worthless in the light of recent scientific discovery in all its branches, and were generated not only by the relative ignorance of the period, but also by the intensity of the reaction against a mediaeval and outworn theology which was served wholesale as a substitute for religion. This principle of design is better known as the Law of Evolution. Evolution has been defined as a steady progression from a lower to a higher type, brought about by the due operation of immutable law. Progress and improvement are,

consequently, two corollaries of this law, and be it noted, they are not the vague aims of a somewhat mistily conceived God, but an actual product or result attained by the world of living matter through the ages during which it has been subject to the laws of nature. It is equally obvious that the limit to this progress and improvement of the forms of living matter is bounded solely by the existence of life. Existence, then, and progress are as nearly synonymous as are the terms God and laws of nature.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that evolution is a fact, not merely a theory, a fact proved beyond peradventure. The recent rapid advances in Palæontology have done more than anything else to establish this by greatly extending our knowledge of animals living in bygone ages. A simple comparison of ancient types with living ones shows graphically the force of evolution and the progress which has been attained. It is obvious that a worm and a horse are very different; it is equally obvious that a horse is a higher type of animal than a worm, due in part, at least, to a more complicated structure. But we know from the fossil record that worms are but a feeble remnant of a remote past before horses, or, for that matter, any vertebrates, had evolved. Again, the modern horse with all its physical power, its solid hoofs and flowing mane, can be contrasted with the ancestral horse, a timid little creature with four toes, standing scarcely two feet high. Here science has brought to light a complete series of connecting links. Each geological period had its horse, steadily increasing in size, steadily losing its toes, steadily lengthening in limb, until our modern horse was developed, practically immune from enemies until man became a factor. This is but one of the many excellent illustrations available to show that evolution is a fact, not a theory.

All living things are, therefore, evolving, progressing towards some higher type, some higher destiny, or else failing and disappearing. There is not the slightest shred of evidence to show that there is any consciousness of this state of affairs, but it is significant that it makes not the least difference; the immutable law grinds on its passionless way, the great design of nature is being worked out. The *modus operandi* of this most colossal of designs is as interesting to study as the fact itself. The instinct of the survival of the species is one essential. Progress to be maintained must be transmitted, and there must be descendants to whom to transmit. Every living thing, then, has this goal towards which its every energy is bent. Thus is progress, or a stage in evolution, maintained. A further great law is necessary to avoid a *status quo,* and this law is the survival of the fittest. This alone makes evolution, in the complete sense of the word, possible. Only the *best* descendants can maintain the necessary rate of progress, and the unfit are allowed to perish. Not only are they allowed to perish, but life on earth is so finely balanced, so marvellously worked out, that they are compelled to perish.

Even this does not satisfy a remorseless Nature. No matter how successful a given animal may be, sooner or later it is inevitably tested for its power of adaptability to changing environment. This is the supreme test, which has caused the extinction of more than three-quarters of all the types of animals that have ever evolved on earth. An interesting example of this is at hand. When the first settlers arrived in New England, the country was covered by primeval woods, and the native birds and mammals were naturally adapted to forest life. Think of the cataclysm that the almost total destruction of these forests, in the interests of civilization, was to their denizens. But certain birds discovered that the proximity of man was favourable to them in that their enemies avoided his vicinity. The Robin was one of these, and is consequently a conspicuous success. The Chimney Swift, nesting formerly in hollow trees, finds chimneys, even in cities, much more advantageous, and as there are now far more chimneys than hollow trees, has greatly increased instead of decreased. These are notable examples of the success of adaptability to a changing environment. They are, alas, a small percentage compared to the host which has vanished from New England, never to appear again.

Such is a brief picture of evolution, how it operates, and by what laws it is operated. One important deduction can be made. Nature obviously intends her laws to work with absolute impartiality and no exceptions are tolerated. Every animal has an appointed habit of life and a definite type of food. We cannot imagine a wild horse living in a burrow underground, or a cow preferring fruit to grass. Obedience to its prescribed law is the outstanding virtue of every plant and animal. Disobedience or failure is invariably punished by death. Ignorance does not count, excuses are never accepted, and there are no alibis. It is no exaggeration to say that three-quarters of all animals born never grow up, and that the first hint of old age is fatal. Small wonder that evolution has never faltered; the design has been unfolding steadily, calmly, uninterruptedly ever since life began.

Another striking corollary is the failure of premature success. Ages ago the class of reptiles culminated in gigantic monsters known as dinosaurs. Of many kinds and of varied habits, they were supreme among the living creatures of their day, without enemies, with abundant means of procuring food. It must be admitted that they had passed every test; they were successful types *par excellence*. And therefore evolution would have culminated in them, had not an impulse in some other direction carried forward the great design of nature. This was exactly what happened. Far higher types of animals have since appeared on earth, but the dinosaurs left no descendants, and their disappearance was as complete and sudden as its cause is to this day mysterious and unexplained.

Let us now see how Man fits into this grand scheme of evolution.

That he, too, is evolving requires no demonstration. It is taken for granted by everybody. Newspaper editorials and reform waves are alike based on this theory as an axiom. That he has evolved is evident to any intelligent tyro in the study of history. In fact so firmly is this idea imbedded in the public mind that the mere threat that some proposed measure will retard the advance of civilization is sufficient to arouse for it a storm of opposition and excited interest.

If, then, it may be granted that Man is subject to evolutionary law, it will be profitable to see to what extent the respects in which he differs from animals affect his life and the laws by which it is regulated. Let us say briefly that man differs from animals chiefly in the character of his mind and the possession of a soul. The extent of his free will makes him morally more responsible. It is of interest, therefore, to realize that in spite of these tremendous differences, differences of plane, rather than of degree on one plane, he is subject to exactly the same laws as animals, only in most cases they work out on a higher plane than the physical. To say that Man is engaged in the struggle for existence may sound absurd if taken literally. He is no longer occupied in dodging more powerful animals who seek him as food, nor does he have to pursue them for food. The struggle for existence has become transferred to an intellectual, an economic plane. Political economists have long since pointed out that the food supply ultimately controls the density of human population, just as the supply of mice controls the number of foxes; and the millionaire living on his income is an exact analogue of the squirrel, which has an ample supply of nuts stored for the winter. The survival of the species is, of course, just as essential for the continued evolution of Man as it is for any animal. While an unpopular doctrine as applied to man, it requires only slight reflection to appreciate that with him also the fittest ultimately survive.

There is only one real difference between man and animals in so far as evolution is concerned, and that is merely a difference of degree. The penalty for disobedience and failure is usually less quickly administered, and is less surely fatal. The intellectual power of man has too often been prostituted to devising means of escape from, or mitigation of the consequences of disobedience. Much illness is the direct outcome of this. Indigestion and tuberculosis are two obvious illustrations. It is startling, on the other hand, to realize how impossible it is ultimately to cheat the law. The number of diseases and internal complications of civilized man has steadily increased, as medical science has increased. Intellectual candour compels the admission that man is the most disobedient of animals.

To postulate the evolution of Man is to postulate for him, as for all evolution, some design. The last paragraph will afford a clue to the proposition that Nature is not primarily interested in his physical evolution, or else his disobedience would be fatal. There are, however, many

better proofs. The relative physical weakness of man compared with other animals is patent. His relative strength and endurance is almost insignificant. Consider the infinitely greater physical power of a flea, if allowance for its size be made. Not only is a relative weakness involved, but steady degeneracy in historical times is a matter of common knowledge. The athlete is a living exhibit of the extent to which the average man has degenerated physically. Man has deteriorated physically as civilization has advanced. This steady deterioration is going on all about us daily. Our parents call us "soft", our unhealthy babies are kept alive and allowed to beget still more unhealthy babies. More and more defects are becoming hereditary. No, the energies of natural law are not directed towards perfecting Man's physical machine.

There are many who think of Man's evolution in terms of the material progress of civilization. In the first place this is logically unsound, because such material progress is merely a by-product of intellectual progress. Granted an increasing knowledge of the facts of nature, and a better understanding of some of the principles of physics, chemistry, electricity, etc., material progress is inevitable whether the real goal of human evolution were to transform us into green monkeys, or some other more reasonable concept. In the second place, many people overlook the fact that intellectual progress does not imply intellectual evolution as a goal. Here history affords the answer. It is undisputed that *knowledge* has enormously increased since, let us say, the time of Aristotle, who was able to sit down and write a compendium of the human knowledge of his day, a feat now absolutely incredible in even one subject. The number of facts to be learned or knowable is now infinitely greater. There is absolutely not a shred of evidence, however, that intellectual *power* has increased, that memory, concentration, subtility of mind, analysis, inductive or deductive reasoning, are more highly developed now than in the earliest Chinese, Hindu, or Egyptian sages. The radical difference between our complex civilization and the relatively simple one of ancient India is easily explained by the greater amount of material to work with, rather than the power of the intellectual instrument using the material. It is just this fact that makes a modern school of scientists so willing to suppose that the human intellect evolved from that of an ape, and that relatively slight differences in structure could account for an apparently enormous discrepancy. There is no satisfactory evidence, then, that intellectual evolution is the goal of mankind.

At this point modern biology yields the field to philosophy to pursue the inquiry further. Its contribution, however, to the subject has been important. If Nature and the divine power behind it are not primarily interested in the physical and intellectual development of man, if these two planes of existence are eliminated, it may well be asked, what is the design? Unfortunately for the peace of mind of the average man, there is only one plane left, and that is the spiritual. A man is his soul, and

his body and mind are nothing but instruments, tools given him to work out an appointed destiny. While it might be urged that any tool is capable of theoretical improvement, and any such improvement could only redound to the ultimate benefit of the thing manufactured, it is obvious that nothing ever would have been manufactured, if we should await the arrival of the perfect tool. And this piece of foolishness is exactly what the average man is doing. He is wrapped up in his tools, in fact identifies himself with them, and makes no effort to manufacture a spiritual life, or to further the progress of his own soul. Nor does he stop here. Not only does he fail to use his tools properly, but he uses them improperly. Small wonder then that life is becoming more and more complex, that more and more problems are crying for solution, that evil, pain, and suffering of all kinds are steadily on the increase—significant sign that the nemesis of flagrant violation of law is slowly but remorselessly overtaking a consistently blind and disobedient race.

It is this appalling disobedience of Man, which is, then, the great lesson to be learned from biology. Man is the only living creature able to conceive of or to realize the great principle of evolution. He alone takes no interest in his development, plays with his tools instead of using them, or makes bad use of them, neglecting or shutting his eyes to his real destiny, his real work in life.

The second great lesson of biology is the utter impossibility of escaping unpleasant consequences. We have seen that ignorance and lack of consciousness in animals make no difference. There are no excuses. The penalty of failure is death and extinction. How much greater the penalty, then, when neither ignorance nor unconsciousness exists? Superior as man may be to other living creatures, he does not suppose himself superior to nature, to the laws of God or the universe. The existence of physical pain is a sharp reminder of the contrary. No, he merely prefers to forget about it, as a thoroughly unpleasant subject. Maybe it is. Perhaps the laws of nature are thoroughly disagreeable, and the universe is constructed on faulty principles. So once complained a foolish woman to a wise philosopher. "Madam", said he, "what do you propose to do about it?" A little later she had decided to accept the universe as it was. "Madam", said the philosopher, "you had jolly well better." Biology can do no better than heartily endorse this piece of advice.

BIOLOGIST.

# TAO-TEH-KING

An Interpretation of Lao Tse's Book of the Way and of Righteousness.

## IV.

26. *Heavy is the root of light; stillness, the master of motion.*

*Therefore the sage walks ever in the Way, keeping stillness and poise.*

*Though he possess splendid palaces, he remains detached and still.*

*Yet the lord of ten thousand chariots may act lightly in his kingdom.*

*Through lightness he loses his ministers; following desire, he forfeits his throne.*

THE Chinese commentators say: "Lao Tse wishes men to master their passions through stillness and poise. He who is inwardly poised, is exempt from the levity of the passions; he whose heart is still, cannot be carried away by anger. He who can control himself, is poised; he who keeps his place, is still. The man with poise subdues the man of levity; he who is still, subdues him who is carried away."

For the last two sentences of the text, we may cite Emerson's phrase: "We forfeit the thrones of angels for temporary pleasures."

27. *Who walks wisely, leaves no footprints; who speaks wisely, makes no mistakes; who reckons wisely, uses no tally; who closes wisely, needs no lock, nor can it be opened; who binds wisely, needs no cord, nor can it be loosed.*

*Therefore the Master, working justly, seeks to save all, rejecting none.*

*Working with justice, he seeks to save all; this is why he rejects none.*

*He has light, and again light.*

*Therefore the righteous is master of the unrighteous.*

*The unrighteous is the opportunity of the righteous.*

*If the one regard not his master, if the other love not his opportunity, though they be prudent, both are blind.*

*This is the great mystery.*

A Chinese commentary says: "He who follows the Way, walks without need of feet, speaks without opening his lips, determines wisely without the measuring of the mind; what he has closed cannot be opened; what he has bound cannot be loosed; for he imprisons his passions and chains his desires."

Considering later sentences of the text, another commentary says:

"Those whom the world calls wise, follow narrow ways. They give with partiality, and know not that justice which is broad and liberal toward all. Whom they esteem virtuous, and like themselves, they are ready to save. But him who seems not virtuous, they hate and cannot love. Therefore they reject many men and many beings. But the holy man is free from partiality, and instructs all without preference. He seeks to save all men and all beings; therefore, there is no man, nor any being, whom he rejects. The holy man is not holy for himself alone; he is destined to be the exemplar of all men. If those who have no virtue will follow his leading, they may be rid of their faults and attain virtue. Therefore he who has virtue is master of those who have not virtue."

28. *Who knows his strength, yet retains gentleness, is the valley of the kingdom. (All flows to him.)*

*If he be the valley of the kingdom, humility abides with him; he becomes again a little child.*

*Who knows his light, yet retains darkness, is the exemplar of the kingdom.*

*If he be the exemplar of the kingdom, holiness abides with him; he becomes again perfect.*

*Who knows his glory, yet retains humility, is likewise the valley of the kingdom.*

*If he be the valley of the kingdom, his righteousness is made perfect; he gains again the perfect simplicity (of the Way).*

*When the perfect simplicity (of the Way) is spread abroad, it moulds all beings.*

*When the holy man attains, he becomes the ruler in the kingdom. Governing all, he injures none.*

This is once more the teaching of humility, the spirit of the valley, which permeates and inspires the whole book. When the simplicity of the Way, the light of the Logos, the spirit of the Master, shall be received into all hearts, it will mould all beings according to the spirit of the Way. This is the coming of the kingdom.

29. *Who seeks to remake the kingdom, will certainly fail.*

*The kingdom is divinely planned; man cannot remake it.*

*If he seek to remake, he destroys; if he seek to seize, he loses.*

*Among beings, some go before, some follow; some are hot, some are cold; some are strong, some are weak; some move, others halt.*

*Therefore the sage refrains from excess, luxury, indulgence.*

Lao Tse has, in the first three sentences, a striking epigram, a general statement of nearly all of human life, whether of the individual or of multitudes. For what are most men and most movements doing, if not seeking "to remake the kingdom of heaven" according to their own desires? But the kingdom is divinely ordained of old; its perpetual laws are to be sought and obeyed. Our amendments will not be carried.

The fourth sentence seems to reinforce this thought by a parable. Men and things are what they are: some are swift, others are slow; some are hot, others are cold. Just as we cannot make men and things over, but must accept them, so we cannot make over the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore the sage, discerning the laws of the kingdom and accepting them, conquers that in him which rebels against the kingdom, and refrains from excess and self-indulgence.

30. *He who works for the Master of men in accordance with the Way, seeks not to advance the kingdom by compulsion.*

*For men render again what they receive.*

*Where armies halt, spring up thorns and briars.*

*In the wake of wars come years of fasting.*

*The sage strikes resolutely and remains still. He dares not advance the kingdom by compulsion.*

*He strikes resolutely, without vaunting himself.*

*He strikes resolutely, without boasting.*

*He strikes resolutely, without arrogance.*

*He strikes resolutely, but only when a blow must be struck.*

*He strikes resolutely, but without self-assertion.*

*The things of nature ripen; then they fade.*

*Not so is it with the Way. Who follows not the Way, comes to destruction.*

If the preceding sentences were an epigram on men and their desires, then the present sentences are a criticism of nearly all ecclesiastical history; of all those, esteeming themselves to be the only righteous, who seek "to advance the kingdom by compulsion." Where they have passed, spring thorns and briars, as in the wake of an army. After their wars, comes spiritual starvation.

The Master seeks to win, not to tyrannize and compel. Having the power to force compliance, he draws, instead, with the cords of love.

31. *Weapons of offence, however keen, work evil:*

*All men hate them. Therefore he who has found the Way is unwilling to use them.*

*In peace, the sage esteems the left; he who makes war esteems the right.*

*Weapons of offence work evil; these are not the weapons of the sage.*

*He uses them from necessity only, but esteems stillness and quietude.*

*In victory he is not elated. To be elated is to love destruction.*

*He who loves destruction cannot rule over the kingdom.*

*In times of rejoicing the left is preferred; in times of mourning the right is preferred.*

*The second in command occupies the left; the commander in chief occupies the right.*

*I mean that he takes the place of mourning.*

*He who has slain a multitude of men should weep over them with tears and sobs.*

*The victor in the battle takes the place of mourning.*

We have the choice of two interpretations for this section of the Chinese sage's book. We may take what is said above simply in the sense of that pacifism which has saturated the people of the Middle Kingdom for the last seven centuries, leaving them, as a nation, at the mercy of foreign conquerors, beginning with the virile race of Genghiz Khan, "Khan of Khans," Prince of Princes, the greatest military family in the history of Asia. In one sense, this pacifism is befitting to the Chinese, who belong, as we have been told, to the outworn Fourth Race, while the more virile nations are sub-races of the Fifth. And, as races still older and more outworn than the Chinese are vanishing bodily from the earth, their souls moving into newer races, so the Chinese tend naturally toward pacifism and subjection. It is in the sense of pacifism that the Chinese commentators, for the most part, interpret these sections; for example: "The sage thinks constantly of peace, of non-action, and abstains from war. He who believes that the better plan is not to wage war shows that he holds precious the lives of men." Perhaps the tinge of Asiatic blood in so many Russians was a contributing cause of the pacifism of Tolstoi and his followers.

But there is a deeper and more mystical sense in which we may understand what Lao Tse has written, that, namely, which is set forth in the fourth Comment in *Light on the Path:* "When the disciple has fully recognized that the very thought of individual rights is only the outcome of the venomous quality in himself, that it is the hiss of the snake of self which poisons with its sting his own life and the lives of those about him, then he is ready to take part in a yearly ceremony which is open to all neophytes who are prepared for it. All weapons of defence and offence are given up; all weapons of mind and heart, and brain, and spirit. Never again can another man be regarded as a person who can be criticized or condemned; never again can the neophyte raise his voice in self-defence or excuse. From that ceremony he returns into the world as helpless, as unprotected, as a new-born child. That, indeed, is what he is. He has begun to be born again on the higher plane of life, that breezy and well-lit plateau from whence the eyes see intelligently and regard the world with a new insight."

This stage in the spiritual life of the disciple would appear to be the theme of Isaiah, when he writes: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: . . . He was op-

pressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

And the same thing is true of those passages in the Sermon on the Mount, on which is based the doctrine of non-resistance. The Greek word really means to "set evil against evil"; the disciple is warned against this, exactly as in *Light on the Path.* But there is an abyss of difference between the refusal to return hate for hate and the failure, whether from weakness or cowardice, to protect others. The mistaken application of this spiritual principle has made China helpless for centuries. It would have had the same result, or worse, had France been unprepared in 1914.

There remains the curious passage regarding the positions of left and right. Concerning this, a Chinese commentator says that the left side corresponds to the active principle; it is the symbol of life: therefore in ceremonies of happiness, the left is preferred. The right side corresponds to the inert principle; it is the symbol of death; therefore in ceremonies of mourning, the right is preferred.

Perhaps the left side is preferred as being "nearest the heart"; but we need not look for a deep principle here any more than we need look for an Occult reason why "Keep to the left" is the rule of the road in England, while other nations keep to the right.

32. *The Way, as the Eternal, has no name.*

*Though according to Its nature It is without size, the whole world could not overcome It.*

*When princes and kings follow It, all beings submit themselves to them.*

*Then will Heaven and Earth unite to send down a sweet dew, and the peoples will enter peace without being commanded.*

*When the Way became differentiated, It took a name.*

*When this name is established, men must learn to become stable.*

*He who is stable is free from peril.*

*The Way extends throughout the universe.*

*As the streams and torrents of the mountains return to the rivers and the seas (so all beings return to the Way).*

A Chinese commentator says that Heaven and Earth, men and all beings, draw their origin from the Way. This is why they can influence each other, establishing correspondences between them. If princes and kings can truly keep to the Way, all beings will come to submit them-

selves to them; Heaven and Earth will of themselves enter into harmony, and the hundred families will attain to peace.

The Way, says another native commentator, is of its own nature invisible and immaterial. At the time when beings had not been manifested, no name could be given to It. But when Its divine influence had wrought transformations, and when beings had come forth from the unmanifest, It received Its name from beings. As soon as Heaven and Earth had become manifest, all beings were born from the Way; this is why It is regarded as the Mother of all beings.

To be stable, says another commentator, is to stand, not allured and drawn away by the things of sense, but resting in perfect quietude, self-poised; then one is free from all danger.

Heaven and Earth are used here, exactly as in the Upanishads, and, indeed, universally in the primeval tradition which survives from the islands of the Pacific to Mexico, for the positive and negative aspects of the manifested Logos, called in the Sankhya philosophy, Purusha and Prakriti, Spirit and Nature.

A commentator says that all rivers and seas are the place where the waters unite; the streams and torrents of the mountains are parts and subdivisions of the waters. The Way is the source of all beings; all beings are branchings of the Way. All the streams and torrents of the mountains return to the central gathering place of the waters, and in the same way all beings return to their place of origin, the Way, from which they set out.

Exactly the same image is used in many Upanishads, as, for example: "And as these rivers, rolling oceanwards, go to their setting on reaching the ocean, and their name and form are lost in the ocean, so the sixteen parts of this seer, moving spiritwards, on reaching Spirit, go to their setting; their name and form are lost in Spirit. This seer becomes one, without parts, immortal" (*Prashna Upanishad,* 6).

There is a kindred passage, "By command of this Eternal, rivers roll eastward and westward from the white mountains", in the *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad* (3, 8, 9).

33. *He who knows other men is prudent.*
*He who knows himself is wise.*
*He who rules other men is potent.*
*He who rules himself is strong.*
*He who suffices to himself is rich.*
*He who acts with energy is possessed of a strong will.*
*He who departs not from his own nature endures long.*
*He who dies and yet endures has everlasting life.*

He who knows other men, says a Chinese commentator, is prudent; he sees external things. His knowledge is limited to knowing the good and bad qualities of men, the superiority or inferiority of their talents.

He who knows himself is illuminated; he is endowed with the inner sight. He alone can know himself who concentrates within himself his hearing, to hear That which has no sound, and his vision, to see That which has no body.

Here again *Light on the Path* may be quoted: "Listen only to the voice which is soundless. Look only on that which is invisible alike to the inner and the outer sense."

Another commentator says that he who suffices not to himself has insatiate desires; even if he had abounding riches, he would be as one in want. Such a man cannot call himself rich. He alone deserves the name, who suffices to himself, who remains calm and free from desire.

Commenting on the sentences which follow, a Chinese writer says: "He who cannot act with energy, to reach the Way, often fails in his designs. His will is not firm. But the sage who acts with energy, ever advances in the Way; the farther off the Way appears, the more his will is enkindled to seek It."

The comment of a native writer on the last phrase of the text is full of interest. He says that "Lao Tse's words, 'dies and yet endures', Chwang Tse's expression, 'not to die,' and the Buddhist 'not to be extinguished', have exactly the same meaning. The body of man is exactly like the case of a chrysalis or the slough of a serpent. Now, when the case of the chrysalis is left dried up, the insect is not dead; when the serpent's slough rots, the serpent is not dead." And another commentator adds: "The animal life of man is dissipated, but the soul remains for ever."

One may compare the simile in the Upanishad: "And like as the slough of a snake lies lifeless, cast forth upon an ant-hill, so lies his body, when the Spirit of man rises up bodiless and immortal, as the Life, as the Eternal, as the Radiance."

The secret is that continual dying to self and to the world, for love of the Eternal, which Saint Paul had in mind when he said, "I die daily", a phrase that had been used earlier by Philo.

"The sage", says another Chinese writer, "looks on life and death as the morning and the evening. He exists, but is detached from life; he dies, yet endures. This is what is called life everlasting."

He is "the true alchemist, in possession of the elixir of life."

34. *The Way stretches everywhere; It can go to the left as well as to the right.*

*All beings rely on It for their life, and It fails them not.*

*When Its works are accomplished, It does not attribute them to Itself.*

*It loves and nourishes all beings, but does not seek to constrain them.*

*Ever free from desires, It may be called little.*

*All beings are subject to It, It constrains them not. It may be called great.*

*Therefore, to the end of his life, the holy man does not regard himself as great.*

*This is why he can accomplish great things.*

The Way, says a commentator, flows everywhere, through the heavens and the earth, and the hearts of the myriad beings; It is on the right, It is on the left; It has neither body nor name.

Another commentator says that, in the beginning, the Way gave life to all beings, and, at the end, It leads them to their perfect fruition. In the most perfect way, It loves and nourishes all beings in the universe. Nevertheless, though it heap all beings with blessings, It never seeks to constrain them, to force their wills, to destroy their spiritual liberty.

35. *The holy man preserves the great Principle (the Way), and all the peoples of the kingdom hasten to him.*

*They run together, and he does them no injury; he brings them peace and calm and quietude.*

*Music and banquets hold the passing traveller.*

*But when the Way comes forth from our lips, it is flat and tasteless.*

*It is looked for and cannot be seen; It is listened for and cannot be heard; It is used and cannot be exhausted.*

When the music ceases, say the commentators, when the banquet comes to an end, the traveller hastily withdraws. This comparison shows that the joys of this world are fleeting and illusive. Not so with the Way. Though It does not delight the ears nor flatter the palate, like music and banquets, yet, when It is followed and applied to life, It can pervade the whole world and endure through the generations.

C. J.

(*To be continued*)

# IS IT EVER RIGHT TO BE DISCOURAGED?

THERE *may* be conditions under which we should all agree that a valiant and devoted servant of Masters was justified in being discouraged. Such exceptional cases, however, would be likely to carry their own warrant with them—the individual would not need to ask, "Is this discouragement right?" For beginners in the theosophic life, like most of us, it might be profitable to ask ourselves, "Is it *sensible* to allow ourselves to be discouraged?" That question suggests that discouragement is voluntary with us. But is it? Would any of us *choose* to dwell in that miserable valley where fog, and the rain of our tears, shut out the sunshine and the cool, clean air from the heights? Perhaps one's first answer is a decided negative,—he knows that he hates being in the grip of discouragement. Yet if he sit down and ask himself, in the quiet of his own heart, whether his moods, his feelings, his hopes, and his fears are all sent him from above (let us say, from God): can he say that they are? No, he cannot. He must confess that they are chosen by him, from a large range of possible feelings constantly open to him;—at least, he would say that this is sometimes true.

So we might ask, Does God send us discouragement? Is God ever discouraged over us? We should have to admit that, according to the present outlook, mankind might be regarded as something of a disappointment. Man certainly does not appear to be filling his natural part in the evolutionary plan as well as the birds,—to take only one of many possible illustrations. What has man to show, to-day, that compares with the beauty of the plumage of the birds, or with the melody of their unceasing chorus of praise? When is his rejoicing as true and clean as theirs, what has he created that is as lovely as their song? Compared with them, man seems to hover in the pin-feather stage; helpless; mouth wide open, clamouring always for more of the Creator's bounty:—a thing unbalanced and unbeautiful, unless viewed with the indulgent eyes of a hopeful parent. Still, our concept of God does not include the possibility of His pausing in an undertaking to view with discouragement the unsatisfactory progress made. It is not possible to imagine such a slackening of the Will that holds the universe in its appointed place and order.

Looking at the case in purely human terms, it would seem that God had much provocation to discouragement, since there are so many of His plans that require for their fulfilment a degree of co-operation that men, with a few exceptions, steadily refuse to accord to God: man's

will runs in the opposite direction. Does God, perhaps, send discouragement to make man turn about and look his opportunity in the face? Some might answer, *Yes*. But those who have the enormous advantage of living in large families or of working in groups would probably dispute that conclusion. They have so often *seen* the operation of so-called misfortunes, and have observed how they were met by their fellows.

Some loss or trial comes, one that bears alike on all, and is not, in any immediate sense, the result (punishment, some would say) of their common mistakes and sins. What happens? Part of their number leap forward, as if by instinct,—feeling that here is the chance to acquire some new power of heart or will. Others steady themselves—make sure of their connection with their true centre—and set themselves to doing more faithfully the tasks already assigned them, feeling that this is their best answer to the new demand. A few, in the pressure of the same identical demand, topple over,—and say, as they lie prone in the dust, "Why did this affliction come *to me?* When I have tried so hard to do right, this is certainly discouraging. There is no use in trying if all my efforts are to be met in this way. I have done the best I could."

Most of us know this feeling—but how does it look to us when we see the evidence of it in others? Sometimes as though "discouragement" were a thin mask put on to hide from the wearer (others see beneath it) the ugly grimace of cowardice. Take the man at his word—he has done his best, and has met with momentary defeat! What an excellent position he is in. Any man who has done his best can do it again; let him only keep on, and defeat must inevitably turn into victory. Or maybe he sees that the effort he had thought so complete was very partial, compared with what he now sees one of his brothers doing;—and he says to himself, "This *is* discouraging; I never could put that much into my effort; in fact I do not wish to give over everything that is beautiful and joyous, as he has done,—only to fall short as he, with his so great efforts, is plainly doing. Is it worth my while to try further when it is all so unlovely?"

One answer to these comrades who, for the moment, think the hill too steep, might be in terms of force. Their faces are set toward the goal; the desire of their hearts does not waver; their difficulty is that their calculation was faulty. They did not know how steep the grade that confronted them. They imagined, we might say, that they were at the beginning slopes, where the least exertion carries one along; instead they are better off because they are further on; they have had the good fortune to reach where the ascent becomes a bit difficult;—the effort they made in the beginning is not sufficient to carry them up the slope ahead. Is it cause for discouragement that they find themselves that much nearer their goal? But they need more force, to carry them up. Yes, and they have learned how to get it; they have learned that they can get all they will use, that Masters, like nature, abhor a vacuum, and

will never let the reservoir go dry so long as one draws from it with steady, wise purpose.

Some people who are making quiet progress, have fits of depression in which they see themselves tobogganing down hill. But why have they taken their eyes off the goal? Why are they looking, instead, at their fellows, and using the devil's measuring rod? It may be God's purpose to give to a soul the great grace of real contrition. How silly, how ungrateful for one so favoured to look with troubled eye, not wholly unmixed with a tinge of envy, upon a comrade whose debonair manner is indeed pleasant but bespeaks an understanding yet so limited, a devotion so infantile, that an older child were indeed foolish to regret that he cannot feel or behave in that way. So much of the time we hold beautiful blossoms in our hands, and discard them to hold, instead, weeds that stain and sting.

May we say, then, as a partial answer to the initial question, that it is never right to be discouraged so long as there is *anything that one can do*. If a student finds himself with no faults to overcome; if there are no virtues that he might acquire; if he has no disappointments, no failures, no heartaches to suffer—and thus a chance to give to others the fruit of willing suffering—then, he is *dead*,—and probably far beyond discouragement.

A. B. C.

# NOTES ON THE WORD THEOSOPHY

SO FAR as the writer knows, the uses of the word Theosophy, from its first appearance in Greek until the present time, have never been recorded. Many facts of significance have been revealed in connection with the employment of this term by one after another author. It appears in the earliest centuries of our era, extends through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and was in almost common use prior to 1875. The present article attempts to suggest to others fruitful fields of research, since it is too incomplete to offer any final statement or conclusive history. Almost every one of the men in whose writings the word occurs would repay a most thorough study, even including critics of the last three centuries. Outside of this more modern field of critics, no author we have discovered used the term without seeming in some way to have come into touch with that Divine Wisdom for which the word Theosophy stands.

Any study of the subject would naturally fall into two divisions. The first would relate to the early history of the word, not so scant as might be supposed; for that history would include not merely its actual appearance in one or another book, but also some indication of the intellectual background which occasioned the use—the choice on the part of the author—of that particular term. The second part, beginning not much before the sixteenth century, would take into account the streams of thought which are represented, first, by Theosophers themselves, who had a greater or less degree of insight and understanding; and, at the opposite pole, theologians, or purely wordly-minded philosophers and scientists, who resented the very existence of the other class, and who spent their energies in denouncing or ridiculing Theosophy, Theosophists, and all things theosophical, at every turn and on every occasion.

To those interested in Theosophy, it might seem at first sight a waste of time to examine the hostile criticism directed against exponents of Theosophy, and the systems which they introduced from time to time into the current of European thought; yet, as a matter of fact, the degree of this criticism, its development, the different grounds on which it has been based, and its gradual modification, reaching to-day almost to an attitude of friendly tolerance in certain quarters, is a phenomenon which has a significance all its own. So that any complete statement of the use of the word Theosophy in history would miss a large part of its fruitfulness by omitting those occasions where it occurs in writers whose attitude varies from purely hostile or ignorantly contemptuous, to one of amused or indulgent friendliness. This later phase cannot, however, be dealt with in this article.

In *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 2), Madame Blavatsky states that Theosophy, a letter for letter rendering of the Greek words θεός and σοφία, is equivalent to the Hindu terms *Brahma* and *Vidya,* which have their own history in relation to our Theosophical Movement[1], and which also have a high antiquity in the Indian philosophical systems. The present writer is not qualified to discuss this interesting phase of the problem, nor can he at the present writing hazard even a guess as to what terms or glyphs were an equivalent in ancient Egypt. But the two Greek terms, phonetically reproduced in Latin and English, particularly when used in conjunction, signified to the Greek mind concepts which are age-old in their antiquity in both India and Egypt, and which, to be properly understood, must take into account the fact that their Greek users knew this age-old tradition, that they stated that they knew it, and that, therefore, modern interpreters must search in Hindu and Egyptian religion and philosophy for the full significance which these two Greek words expressed. As Mr. John T. Driscoll writes in the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia,* under the caption "Theosophy": "India is the home of all theosophic speculation. Oltramere says that the directive idea of Hindu civilization is theosophic. Its development covers a great many ages, each represented in Indian religious literature. There are formed the basic principles of theosophy. Knowledge of the occult laws in nature and in life, the intuitive method, superhuman powers, hostility to established religion, are not all equally apparent in each age, but are present conjunctively or separately through the whole course of its history."

Barring the last phrase, Mr. Driscoll's statements are unexceptionable, and show an advance over such earlier statements as Madame Blavatsky must have had in mind when she wrote in the opening article of *The Theosophist:* "There were Theosophists before the Christian era, notwithstanding that the Christian writers ascribed the development of the Eclectic theosophical system to the early part of the third century of their Era. Diogenes Laertius traces Theosophy to an epoch antedating the dynasty of the Ptolemies; and names as its founder an Egyptian hierophant called Pot-Amun, the name being Coptic and signifying a priest consecrated to Amun, the god of Wisdom. [The *Theosophical Glossary* (1st edition), says "Amun (Coptic). The Egyptian god of wisdom who had only Initiates or Hierophants to serve him as priests."] But history shows it revived by Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Neo-platonic School. He and his disciples called themselves 'Philalethians,' lovers of the truth, while others termed them 'Analogists' on account of their method of interpreting all sacred legends, symbolical myths, and mysteries, by a rule of analogy or correspondence, so that events which

[1] Cf. the mistaken rendering of the recent *Harmsworth Encyclopedia,* London, *c.* 1910, art. "Theosophy," vol. VIII, p. 5912. "An intuitive or ecstatic mode of enunciating doctrines, originated in, or at least more particularly characteristic of, India, where it is entitled Atmâ Vidyâ (spirit science), or Guptâ Vidyâ (secret science)." The author of the article misses the true value of the terms.

had occurred in the external world were regarded as expressing operations and experiences of the human soul. It was the high purpose of Ammonius to reconcile all sects, peoples, and nations under one common faith—a belief in one Supreme, Eternal, Unknown, and Unnamed Power, governing the Universe by immutable and eternal laws. His object was to prove a primitive system of Theosophy, which at the beginning was essentially alike in all countries; to induce all men to lay aside their strifes and quarrels, and to unite in purpose and thought as the children of one common Mother; to purify the ancient religions, by degrees corrupted and obscured, from all dross of human element, by uniting them and expounding them upon pure philosophical principles. Hence, the Buddhistic, Vedantic, and Magian or Zoroastrian systems were taught in the Eclectic Theosophical School, along with all the philosophies of Greece. Hence also, that pre-eminently Buddhistic and Indian feature among the ancient Theosophists of Alexandria, due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human race, and a compassionate feeling for even the dumb animals. While seeking to establish a system of moral discipline which enforced upon people the duty to live according to the laws of their countries; to exalt their minds by the research and contemplation of the one Absolute Truth; his chief object, in order, as he believed, to achieve all others, was to extricate from the various religious teachings, as from a many-chorded instrument, one full and harmonious melody which would find response in every truth-loving heart." [*The Theosophist,* vol. 1, Oct. 1879, pp. 2-4.]

Madame Blavatsky here clearly indicates that the pre-Christian Theosophical Movement was carried forward by the Eclectic School of Greek Theosophers whose centre was in Alexandria. Herennius, both the Origens, Cassius Longinus, the famous Clement, and Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus and their school, were all among the principal pupils and followers of Ammonius. These Alexandrian Neoplatonists are celebrated for their attempt to reconcile the Greek with the Jewish systems of philosophy, with all that that implied of what lay back of both the Greek and the Jewish. They also carried forward some echo, at least, of the ancient traditional Wisdom of Egypt; and succeeded in infusing an element of this accumulated Wisdom into the whole stream of Western Christian thought. However strenuously orthodox Roman theology excluded what was precious along with the vagaries of the Neoplatonists, their impress was too deep not to be lasting; and they bequeathed a body of literary material to which men of a far later and more limited and dogmatic era, could and did turn for inspiration and support. Not only this, but it may be said that their influence is directly responsible for certain accepted canons of belief in orthodoxy itself; a debt which orthodoxy is none too eager to acknowledge, but which is fully recognized by impartial students.

It is of primary interest, since Alexandria was the centre in which all these great streams of thought—Indian, Greek, Persian, Jewish, Roman, and Egyptian—met and were fused, that the Lodge should seem

to have planted there a centre of life which should leaven the whole, the force of which was perhaps the most potent factor in the history of Christianity since St. Paul himself. "Theosophic teaching comes to the front in the third period of Greek philosophy," says Mr. Driscoll, in the article above quoted. "Hence, it is found in the Jewish-Greek philosophy of the Neoplatonists and the theosophic atmosphere due to the influence of the Orient is plainly shown in Plotinus. The gnostic systems reveal more theosophy than theology, and in the Jewish Kabbala is found a theosophy mixed with various forms of magic and occultism." It is also of significance that from the time of Ammonius Saccas himself (died A. D. 242), this group of "Alexandrian Neoplatonists" so-called—whom Madame Blavatsky characterized as an "Eclectic Theosophical School"—were Christians, or within the direct stream of Christian thought and endeavour. The church historian Eusebius states [*Church History*, VI. 19, sec. 6.] that Ammonius was born a Christian, "remained faithful to Christianity throughout his life, and even produced two works called *The Harmony of Moses and Jesus*, and the *Diatessaron* or *Harmony of the Four Gospels*." St. Jerome makes similar statements. Either Eusebius is stretching a point to favour his church, or he is speaking of another Ammonius, because Porphyry, who lived eleven years with Ammonius, says that Ammonius apostatized in later life, and *left no writings behind*. Porphyry also says that Ammonius and his school maintained the traditional secrecy, "after the manner of Pythagoreans." H. P. B. says, in the *Glossary*, that Ammonius "was of poor birth and born of Christian parents, but endowed with such prominent, almost divine, goodness as to be called *Theodidaktos*, 'god-taught.' He honoured that which was good in Christianity, but broke with it and the churches very early, being unable to find in it any superiority over the older religions." So it would seem that the Eclecticism of Alexandria, far from being "primarily a sign of scientific decay, an involuntary evidence of the exhaustion of thought"[2]—as the German Zeller would have it—was rather at once the summing up at the end of an out-worn cycle, and the parting gift of this old cycle to the new one which took its start with Christianity.

The first admitted use of the one word *θεοσοφία* is, according to the dictionaries, in Clement of Alexandria. The words *θεός* and *σοφία* were used separately, however, though in immediate juxtaposition, by St. Paul and also by Philo, as terms to convey just the intellectual concepts already existing in the earlier Wisdom religions. It is necessary to appreciate the full significance which the term *σοφία* had acquired at the hands of Philo and St. Paul—especially when used with *θεός*—to estimate the true importance of the fact that our word Theosophy appears thus early in the Alexandrian school, used by one of Ammonius' own disciples, and at the opening of one of his most mystical writings.

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[2] *A History of Eclecticism in Greek Philosophy*, being the third part, first section, of Dr. E. Zeller's *Philosophie der Griechen*, published in 1844-52, translated by S. F. Alleyne, London, 1883, p. 19.

The Wisdom literature in the Bible is too well known to need comment. The Hebrew terms *hokmah* (Wisdom)[3], and *hakam* (wise), constantly employed in Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, and the Wisdom of Solomon, were translated in the Septuagint by the Greek word *σοφία*. Philo employs *σοφία* hundreds of times, amplifying the scriptural use, as was his wont, with all the riches of Greek philosophical traditions. Originally an attribute of God, *σοφία* became identified in the Talmud with the Spirit of God, the female principle of an adopted Trinity. This principle corresponded with the Holy Ghost of later Christianity (cf. Proverbs, cap. VIII, with Sirach, 24 ff.), and was canonized as St. Sophia by the Greek Christians. Philo, a contemporary of Jesus and St. Paul (he speaks of himself as an old man in the year 41 A. D.), was probably educated as a Sophist, and went to be initiated in the Egyptian school at Alexandria. "He was a great mystic and his works abound with metaphysics and noble ideas, while in esoteric knowledge he had no rival for several ages among the best writers," writes H. P. B.; and again: "Philo Judæus endeavoured to reconcile the Pentateuch with the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy."

"It was given to a contemporary of Jesus to become the means of pointing out to posterity, by his interpretation of the oldest literature of Israel, how easily the Kabalistic Philosophy agreed in its esotericism with that of the profoundest Greek thinkers. This contemporary, an ardent disciple of Plato and Aristotle, was Philo Judæus. While explaining the Mosaic books according to a purely kabalistic method, he is the famous Hebrew writer whom Kingsley calls the Father of New Platonism. It is evident that Philo's Therapeutes are a branch of the Essenes."[4]

Philo had without question a most important influence on nascent Christianity, because in himself he effected the reconciliation between the esotericism of the three great streams of thought of his day; and through his disciples this reconciliation definitely entered Christianity. According to the manner of the Eclectics he mingled with his Platonism ideas derived more particularly from Pythagoras, to such an extent that Clement of Alexandria calls him a Pythagorean. His emphasis on strict virtue indicates the genuineness of his initiation, for in his day the strictest Stoics were the only philosophers outside the schools in Alexandria who seem to have upheld any high ideals of virtue.

It is particularly interesting, therefore, to find Philo using the terms *θεός* and *σοφία* together, on many occasions. As the author is unable to check up editors of Philo's text, from the 17th century to modern times, by reference to the actual manuscripts preserved in libraries in Europe, it is impossible to say whether Philo combines the two Greek words *θεός* and *σοφία* to make one word, or whether he only employs them in juxta-

[3] Cf. Maïmonides (1135 to 1204), the learned Jewish Talmudist, in his commentary on the use and significance of this term: *Guide for the Perplexed*, "Man's Perfection," cap. LIV,—trans. by M. Friedländer, London, 1910.

[4] Mme. Blavatsky—*The Theosophical Glossary: The Key to Theosophy*, p. 5, first edition: and *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 144, first edition.

position. For instance, in the suggestive passage, "We say, therefore, without paying any attention to the difference here existing in the names, that Theosophy (*τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίαν*), the daughter, is both a male child and a father, and that it is that which sows the seed of, and which begets learning in, souls, and also education, and knowledge, and prudence, and all honourable and praiseworthy things,"[5] it is impossible to tell whether Philo used the one word Theosophy, or the two terms; though in either case he expresses exactly the same idea. But it does not very much matter whether he did or did not actually use the single word, because Philo's meaning throughout is so abundantly clear. He is without question speaking of that Divine Wisdom which we mean to-day when we use the word Theosophy.

It will be worth while to examine a few more passages of Philo to gain the full value of his thought. In another essay entitled *On Seeking Instruction,* he concludes with the words: "Therefore, the wise man has now been sufficiently perfected to be the inheritor of the knowledge of the subjects above mentioned. 'For,' says the historian, 'on that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, to thy seed will I give this land.' But what land does he mean but that which has been already mentioned, to which he is now making reference? of the fruit of which is the safe and most certain comprehension of Theosophy (*τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίας*), according to which it preserves for its dividers all the good things which exist without any admixture or taint of evil, as if they had been incorruptible from their very beginning. After this he proceeds to add, 'From the River of Egypt to the Great River, the river Euphrates,' showing that those who are perfect (*οἱ τέλειοι*) have their beginnings in the body, and the outward sense, and the organic parts, without which we cannot live, for they are useful for instruction in the life which is in union with the body; but they have their end with Theosophy (*τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίαν*). which is truly the great river overflowing with joy, and cheerfulness, and all other blessings."[6] In both these passages Philo speaks of Theosophy as nourishing the soul. In another, he carries his use of the term into closer relation with both Hebrew and Greek thought, introducing the Logos doctrine as part of Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom. He writes, "Those also, who have inquired what it is that nourishes the soul,—for, as Moses says, 'They knew not what it was,'—learnt at last and found that it was the Word of God (*ὁ λόγος θεοῦ*), and the Divine Reason, from which flow all kinds of instinctive and everlasting wisdom. This is the heavenly nourishment which the Holy Scripture indicates, saying in the connection of the cause of all things, 'Behold I rain upon you bread from Heaven,' for in real truth it is God who showers down

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[5] *Philonis Judæi Opera,* by Adriano Turnebo and David Hoeschelio, Frankfurti 1691, p. 458. *Cf.* C. D. Younge—*The Works of Philo Judæus,* translated from the Greek, in the Bohn edition; *On Fugitives,* Vol. II, pp. 204 and 205. I have materially altered Younge's translation, which seems faulty.

[6] *On Seeking Instruction,* Vol. II, Section 62, p. 157. For text, *cf.* Thomas Mangey, *Philonis Judæi Opera Omnia,* Erlangal, 1820, 2nd ed., Vol. IV, p. 140.

Theosophy (σοφίαν ὁ θέος) from above upon all the intellects which are properly disposed for the reception of it, and which are fond of contemplation. . . . What, then, is this bread? Tell us. 'This,' says he, 'is the word ( ὁ λόγος ) which the Lord has appointed.' This divine appointment at the same time both illuminates and sweetens the soul, which is endowed with sight, shining upon it with the beams of truth, and sweetening with the sweet virtue of persuasion, those who thirst and hunger after excellence."[7] In passing, it would not stretch the Greek too far to translate this last phrase, "Those who hunger and thirst after *righteousness,*" thus reproducing exactly the words of one of Christ's Beatitudes.

To resume, Philo says again: "But he who advanced further, not only seeing, but seeing God, was called Israel; the meaning of which name is, 'seeing God'; but others, even if they ever do open their eyes, still bend them down toward the earth, pursuing only earthly things, and being bred up among material things; for the one raises his eyes to the sky, beholding the manna, the divine Logos, the heavenly incorruptible food of the soul, which is food of contemplation: but the others fix their eyes on garlic, and onions," etc.[8]

Finally, in a thoroughly mystical essay entitled, *The Worse Plotting against the Better,* Philo speaks of "Theosophy" (σοφίαν θεοῦ) as "the nurse and foster-mother and educator of those who desire incorruptible food," and indicates in his allegorical manner that this was the rock and also the stream of water from which "the fountain of divine wisdom" flowed, when the rock in the wilderness was struck by Moses' mystic wand. "This rock, Moses, in another place, using a synonymous expression, calls manna, the most ancient word (λόγος) of God."

In these passages, briefly indicated here, occur many words, phrases and ideas almost identical with those used by St. Paul, and even by Christ himself. They are, of course, of frequent occurrence in the Neoplatonic Alexandrian writers. Philo, for instance, in one of the above passages, says, "That it is men who are *perfect,* who have their beginnings in the body and the outward sense . . . but have their end with Theosophy." St. Paul, using exactly the same word, perfect, οἱ τελειοι, which was intimately associated with the Greek Mysteries, writes, "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasible words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not be in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak Theosophy among the *perfect:* yet a wisdom not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, which are coming to naught: but we speak in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which

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[7] Turnebo and Hoeschelio, Op. cit., p. 470—*De Profugis.* Mangey, Vol. IV, p. 284. Younge, Vol. II, p. 222 gives in translation more than the text of either of the above. We have included Younge's additional sentences. He does not explain where he found them, or what MSS. he takes for his authority.

[8] The title of the book is, *Who is the Heir of Divine Things.*—Younge, Vol. II, pp. 108-9. Mangey, Op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 34.

God hath ordained before the ages unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this age knoweth: for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."[9]

In the Wisdom of Solomon, Septuagint version, we find (Chapter vii, vv. 25 and 28), "For she (Wisdom, *σοφία*) is the breath of the *power of God,* and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty . . . for God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom." Philo, in the above cited passages, has already referred to the Logos as the hidden manna, the *Wisdom of God,* Theosophy, illuminating the perfected soul. He says specifically in another place that, "No mortal thing could have been formed on the similitude of the supreme Father of the universe, but only after the pattern of the second deity, who is the Word (Λόγος) of the supreme Being; since it is fitting that the rational soul of man should bear before it the type of the divine Word ( Λόγος ); since in his first Word God is superior to the most rational possible nature."[10]

We find these ideas of the Power and Wisdom of God combined in Paul, and ascribed to Christ, the Logos. "Where is the Wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the age? For, seeing that in the wisdom of God (Theosophy, *ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ*) the age through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure, through the foolishness of the thing preached, to save them that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles, foolishness; but unto the called themselves, (*αυτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς*=the elect?) both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the *Power of God,* and the *Wisdom of God,*"[11]—Theosophy—**Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν.**

It would take us too far afield to trace all the occasions in St. Paul, or in Philo, where these ideas are developed; but, before leaving this early period we shall refer to two striking passages in the Gospels, which give a still more authoritative background for the meaning of our word.

In St. Matthew, chapter 23, verse 34, Christ is reported as saying, "Therefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel, the righteous, unto the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." Now, St. Luke in a parallel passage, chapter 11, verses 47-51, makes a noteworthy change in the words of Christ. He writes: "Woe unto you! For ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. So ye are witnesses and

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[9] *1st Cor.* 2:4-8. The marginal reading for *σοφίαν θεοῦ* is given as *θεοῦ σοφίαν*

[10] *Questions and Solutions.* Book 2—question 62—Younge. Vol 4, pp. 391-2.

[11] *1st Cor.* 1:20-25, incl.

consent unto the works of your fathers: for they killed them, and ye build their tombs. Therefore, also, said the *Wisdom of God*, I will send unto them prophets and apostles; and some of them they shall kill and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets that was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary: yea, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation." The Greek words, ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεου ἔιπεν—the Wisdom of God said—seems to denote the Wisdom of God which is operative and embodied, as it were, in Jesus; and this phrase was frequently quoted by Christian martyrs, when, to comfort themselves under persecution, they recalled this saying of Christ. In fact it became a recognized formula of quotation. Eusebius, also, perhaps in the words of Hegesippus, calls those who had personally heard Christ, "The hearers of the Wisdom of God"—ὁι ἀυτᾶις ἀκοαῖς τῆς ενθέου σοφίας—[12] bringing *theos* and *sophia* together in the same way as did Philo and St. Paul. It is obvious from the prevalence of such a usage that Christ, the Wisdom of God, was a common phrase among primitive Christians. And it is a striking fact that St. Luke puts the words, ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ into the mouth of Christ, making Christ say of himself that he was the Wisdom of God.

Fascinating as it would be to develop this thesis in more detail, and to establish beyond peradventure that Christ himself, as well as St. Paul and Philo, was using a term freighted with meaning, and of age-old association with the mystery doctrines of Egypt and India, it is necessary to pass on to those who followed immediately in the footsteps of the Apostles, in whose writings our word occurs. Lyddel and Scott give Clement of Alexandria (in his *Stromata*) as the first writer in whom the united word Theosophy occurs. The present author, however, is of the opinion that, as at least a majority of the works that have come down to us ascribed to the pen of Dionysius the Areopagite are genuine, and as he used the single word repeatedly, the actual use of the word antedates Clement by a generation. It has been the fashion, since German scholarship attained the ascendancy, to consider the famous works of Dionysius as the product of some unknown and mysterious man living between 475 and 525 A. D. However, according to the Rev. John Parker, translator of much of Dionysius, the latest German scholarship, so-called, has granted, through Dr. Schneider, that "In Germany they now admit that the *external* proofs are in favour of the genuineness of Dionysius . . . they pretend that the *doctrine* is too clear and precise to have been written in the Apostolic Age."[13] The author, after a brief survey, agrees that the external proofs favour the genuineness of the primitive Dionysius, rather than of the later and

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[12] Cf. Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, N. Y. 1887, p. 582, foot of column 1.

[13] *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, by the Rev. John Parker, M.A., London, 1897. Preface to the *Divine Names*, p. xvi. Italics ours.

pseudo-Dionysius, and feels that his doctrine is exactly such as to have been almost necessarily the work of some one who could only have had the profound knowledge of a convert and companion of St. Paul, the familiar friend of St. John, and the Initiate of a truly Apostolic Age.

Dionysius, Bishop of Athens, who was martyred in 119 A. D., wrote his first book on the *Divine Names* according to one ancient authority in A. D. 98,—and he used the word Theosophy in it on numerous occasions. He says of himself in the fourth section of the *Divine Names:* "And whatever other divinely wrought illuminations, conformable to the oracles, the secret tradition of our inspired leaders bequeathed to us for our enlightenment,—in these, also, we have been initiated." And again: "Besides, we must also consider this, that the teaching handed down by the Theologians is twofold—one, secret and mystical,—the other, open and better known—one, symbolical and an initiator—the other, philosophic and demonstrative;—and the unspoken is intertwined with the spoken. The one persuades and seeks after the truth of the things expressed, the other acts, and implants in Almighty God by instructions in mysteries not learnt by teaching. And certainly, neither our holy instructors, nor those of the law, abstain from God-befitting symbols throughout the celebrations of the most holy mysteries. Yes, we see even the most holy Angels mystically advancing things Divine through enigmas: and Jesus himself, speaking the word of God in parables, and transmitting the divinely wrought mysteries through a typical spreading of a table." [14]

With these by way of giving Dionysius' credentials, he writes to Bishop Polycarp that, "By the knowledge of created things, well called philosophy by him [Apollophanes], and by the divine Paul named Wisdom of God (*σοφία θεοῦ*), the true philosophers ought to have been elevated to the Cause of things created and to the knowledge of them."[15] This links Dionysius, as might have been expected, with St. Paul, and his authority for the use of the terms. He opens another work entitled *Mystic Theology,* with an address to the Trinity: "Supernal Triad, both super-God and super-good, guardian of the Theosophy of Christians, direct us to the super-unknown mystic oracles, both super-glorious and on the topmost pinnacle, where the simple and absolute and changeless mysteries of Theology lie hidden within the super-luminous darkness of the silence, not revealing hidden things which in its deepest darkness shines above the most super-brilliant; and in the wholly impalpable and invisible, fills to overflowing eyeless minds with glories of surpassing beauty." [16] Again, in the *Celestial Hierarchy* he writes, "Thus do all Theosophers, and prophets of the secret inspiration, separate the Holy of Holies from the uninitiated and unholy, to keep them undefiled; and they prefer the dissimilar description of holy things, so that divine things

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[14] *Divine Names,* Chap. 1, Sec. 4; cf. Migne, *Pat. Gr.,* Tom. 3, column 620.—Letter IX to Titus, the Bishop, *Ibid.* col. 1105.

[15] *Pat. Gr.,* Op. cit., Letter VII, col. 1080.

[16] *Pat. Gr.,* III, col. 997.

should never be reached by the profane, nor those who diligently contemplate the divine imagery rest in the types as though they were true,"—a thoroughly interesting sentence.[17] It will be noticed that the words here are used in their integrity, no longer divided as in St. Paul.

In the *Divine Names* there are two brilliant definitions of Theosophy and Theosophers. The first is as follows: "And when Theosophers (ὁι θεόσοφοι, one word) themselves celebrate him, as Author of all things, under many Names, from all created Things—as Good, as Beautiful, as Wise, as Beloved, as God of Gods, or Lord of lords, as Holy of Holies, as Eternal, as Being, as Author of Ages, as Provider of Life, as Wisdom, as Mind, as Logos, as Knowing, as pre-eminently possessing all the Treasures of all Knowledge, as Power, as Powerful, as King of kings, as Ancient of days, as never growing old and Unchangeable, as Preservation, as Righteousness, as Sanctification, as Redemption, as surpassing all things in greatness, and as in a gentle wind."[18] Later on in the same book, he says that, "The angelic minds . . . see at a glance the divine conceptions indivisibly and immaterially, and are moulded by the God-like One to the divine and Super-wise Mind and Reason, as attainable by reason of Theosophy . . .Theosophy is called source, and cause, and main-stay and completion, and God, and term of wisdom itself, and of every kind, and of every mind and reason, and of every sensible perception."[19] And finally, "Thus, then, the early leaders of our Divine Theosophy are dying every day on behalf of truth, testifying as is natural, both by every word and deed, to the one knowledge of the truth of the Christians, that it is of all, both more simple, and more divine, yea, that it is the sole true and one and simple knowledge of God."[20]

No wonder, with such an accumulated setting, that our word Theosophy should have been employed by numerous Christian writers. Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 153 to 217), a pupil of Ammonius Saccas, profound student of Philo, and a mystic and scholar of the highest degree, uses our word adverbially in his *Stromata,* a work replete with traditional wisdom of Greece and Egypt. "The *Stromata,*" he says in the opening chapter, "will contain the truth mixed-up in the dogmas of philosophy, or rather covered over and hidden, as the edible part of the nut in the shell. For, in my opinion, it is fitting that the seeds of truth be kept for the husbandmen of faith, and no others. . . . . For it does not follow that if a man accomplishes anything, not purposely, he does it through force of circumstances. But he will do it, managing it by Theosophy (θεοσόφως), and in accommodation to circumstances. . . . For, like farmers who irrigate the land beforehand, so we also water with the liquid stream of Greek learning what in it is earthy; so that

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[17] *Ibid.*, col. 145. Cf. John Scotus Erigena's barbarous translation of this passage in *Pat. Lat.*, Tom. 122, col. 1043.

[18] *Ibid.*, col. 596.

[19] *Ibid.*, col. 868.

[20] *Ibid.*, col. 873.

it may receive the spiritual seed cast into it, and may be capable of easily nourishing it." "But the husbandry is twofold,—the one unwritten, and the other written;" and again he says, "And to him who is able secretly to observe what is delivered to him, that which is veiled shall be disclosed as truth; and what is hidden to the many, shall appear manifest to the few. For why do not all know the truth? Why is not righteousness loved, if righteousness belongs to all? But the mysteries are delivered mystically, that what is spoken may be in the mouth of the speaker, rather not in his voice, but in his understanding . . . Some things I purposely omit in the exercise of a wise selection, afraid to write what I guarded against speaking; not grudging, for that were wrong; but fearing for my readers lest they should stumble by taking them in a wrong sense; and as the proverb says, we should be found 'reaching a sword to a child' . . . . Some things my treatise will hint; on some it will linger; some it will merely mention. It will try to speak imperceptibly, to exhibit secretly, and to demonstrate silently. The dogmas taught by remarkable sects will be adduced; and to these will be opposed all that ought to be premised in accordance with the profoundest contemplation of the knowledge which, as we proceed to the renowned and venerable canon of tradition *from the creation of the world,* will advance to our view; setting before us what, according to natural contemplation, necessarily has to be treated of beforehand, and clearing off what stands in the way of this arrangement. So that we may have our ears ready for the reception of the tradition of true knowledge . . . and there are some mysteries before other mysteries." [21]

Without having had time to discover if other contemporary and subsequent writers use the word Theosophy, which is highly probable, it is interesting to note that it appears as a title applied to the Greek Emperor Constantine IV (Pogonotus), who presided over the Sixth Œcumenical Council which met in Constantinople from November 7, 680 to November 16, 681. On several different occasions Constantine is spoken of as "beloved of God," and "a Theosopher." [22]

This is translated in Latin by *Deo instructae,* the Latin term "Theosophus" apparently not having as yet been invented. We might note here that the same epithet in its Latin form is applied by an old chronicler to the French King, Robert the Good, in a charter dated September, A. D. 999.[23] It has been said that it was through Robert the Good that the inherited gift of healing was acquired by the anointed French kings.

John Scotus Erigena (d. c. 880 A. D.), was apparently the first to coin the Latin word *Theosophus,* and he did this by translating the works

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[21] Migne, *Pat. Gr.,* Tom. 9, col. 708, etc. *Stromata,* Bk. 1, Chap. 1. Cf. the translation in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. II, pp. 302-3.

[22] *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio.* J. D. Mansi. Florentiae, 1756. Tom. XI, col. 221—cf. columns 207 and 210.

[23] Jean Besly, "Data mense Septembri . . . an. 999. Indictione 12. regnante Rotberto Rege Theosopho, anno 5, legendum forte anno primo."

of Dionysius. The novelty of its use is proved by the fact that he translates the Greek word θεοσοφίαν in one place by *divinas sapientias*, whereas he coins the term directly from the Greek in another passage.[24] From Erigena the Latin term spread into scholastic theology, and appears from time to time as a synonym for Philosophus—Philosopher—thus, in large measure, losing its special connotation. For instance, the second Council of Limoges in 1031 speaks of King Robert as "*doctissimo* rege Francorum Roberto" rather than as "Theosopho."[25]

Hugh of Flavens, Bishop of Verdun, in his *Chronicle*, uses the term twice, in a rather derogatory sense. He says, "But wisdom fled from inhabiting a body dwelling in the senses. He pretended that at that time he was a philosopher, in order that those who did not know that he was a theosopher would believe him."[26] Hugh died in 1098.

From now on the word seems to lose its special significance, until the time of Reuchlin (d. 1492), Agrippa (d. 1535), Cordano (d. 1576), Pico della Mirandola, and Paracelsus (d. 1540). With them the word Theosophy enters upon its second phase of meaning; this second phase in its turn containing also those writers who opposed Theosophy, and who, therefore, referred to it only in terms of criticism or ridicule.

In conclusion, it would seem superfluous to point out the thoroughly orthodox setting in which the word Theosophy entered upon its checkered career. We are inclined to differ from Matthew Arnold, who, though he says, "Jesus spoke of himself as uttering the word of God; but that he called himself the Logos, there is neither indication nor probability: there is, however, some trace of him calling himself the *Wisdom of God*,"—yet adds, "These things are not in the manner of Jesus. Jesus never theosophized."[27]

Only those who do not understand could say that "Jesus never theosophized."

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[24] *Joannis Scoti Opera quae supersunt omnia. Pat. Lat.*, Tom. 122, col. 270, 1043, etc.

[25] **Mansi, Opus cit., Tom. XIX, col. 526.**

[26] *Hugonis Abbatis Flaviniacensis Chronicon. Pat. Lat.*, Tom. 154, lib. 1, col. 151.

[27] Title: *Objections to "Literature and Dogma." Contemporary Review*, 1875, Vol. 26, pp. 684-5.

# NŌ

NŌ is the classic drama of Japan. The character for it signifies *to be able, talent, performance* or *accomplishment.*

The Nō is a combination of recitation and dance with music. It is often compared to the Greek drama with which, indeed, it has certain resemblances. The Greek drama was derived from the Rites of Bacchus and from the goat song. The Nō is derived from ancient shrine dances in honour of Shinto gods, from court dances, and from Buddhist shrine pantomimes.

There is a legend as to the origin of the Kagura or ancient shrine dance. The Sun Goddess, disgusted by the pranks of her brother, hid herself in a cave and left the world in darkness. The gods assembled in the dry bed of the River of the Milky Way to deliberate upon a means of luring her forth. They caused Ame no Hime, "The Terrible Female of Heaven," to disguise herself fantastically and to dance upon an inverted tub. "Then the gods laughed till the high planes of Heaven shook," and the Sun Goddess came out of her cave. These Kagura are still danced at certain temples.

At the court it was the custom to dance not only martial but fanciful dances. The nobles of the court at Kioto composed poems to accompany these dances, and sang songs in unison at court ceremonies. Finally the chorus of nobles became a trained chorus, with musicians, and a minister in charge of it. These court entertainments were called Saibara. Many of the names of Nō plays are identical with the names of Saibara given in a manuscript collection compiled about the year 900 A. D. In the famous romance, *Genji Monogatari*[1], the young hero, shining Genji, dances before the court the dance of the Blue Sea Waves, and sings a song. Perhaps both are handed down to us in the play *Suma Genji.*

In the Buddhist temples pantomimes were performed, representing incidents in the lives of the saints and the interventions of Buddha or the Bodhisattwa. These were accompanied by the reading of scriptural texts. In Japan, Shintoism and the various sects of Buddhism live amicably side by side and interpenetrate. The Buddhism of the Nō is that of the "Greater Vehicle," sometimes of the Amidist school, sometimes that of the more mystical Zen.

The Nō is a gathering together of all these elements. By the fourteenth century it had become a serious dramatic performance.

There grew up at the same time among the acrobats, jugglers and mummers a form of comedy, the Kiōgen or "Wild Words." These farces are still played as interludes between serious Nō, much as were mediæval farces in Mystery Plays. The name "Wild Words" comes from a poem by the Chinese poet, Po Chü-i. "May the vulgar trade of letters that I have plied in this life, all the folly of wild words and fine phrases, be

[1] The *Genji Monogatari* was written by the Lady Murasaki Shikibu at the end of the tenth century. It is one of the Japanese classics.

transformed into a hymn of praise that shall celebrate the Buddha in age on age to come, and cause the Great Wheel of Law to turn." [2]

The Shoguns, especially, took an interest in Nō. The Great Yoshimitsu was a patron of the priest-actor Kagehisa, and of his son Seami, the author of many Nō played to-day, and of the famous treatise on the theatre, the *Kwadensho*.

The tradition of Nō has been carried on in an unbroken line from the fourteenth century. When the Shogunate fell in 1868, the actor Umewaka Minoru, a descendant of Kagehisa, at infinite pains preserved the art from extinction. He bought up an old stage, old costumes and masks and continued to give performances.

Since the fourteenth century, Nō has been essentially an aristocratic art. It was performed for the Shogun and the nobility. Only one performance a year was public. The daimyos were forbidden to go to any other theatre. The actors themselves were descended from daimyo and samurai families. They handed on the secret traditions of their art from father to son. Great stress was laid upon their manners and their morals. Umewaka Minoru says that the character of an actor cannot be concealed, and that, if he would play great parts, he must be "pure, moral and true in all his daily life."

Seami says that Nō is to teach the history of the country and to elevate the mind and morals. Even in the farce there should be nothing low.

The first Nō theatres were built out of doors in dry river beds or in court yards. The Nō stage is a raised platform with a roof supported by four pillars. The back is closed, and upon this wall is painted a pine tree, symbolic of the Unchanging. The stage is connected with the actors' dressing room by a bridge along which, at regular intervals, are placed three dwarf pines. The proportions of the stage and bridge are rigidly determined. At the back of the stage sit the four musicians, the flute player and the three drummers. One drum is played as is ours, with sticks, the other two, sometimes called tambourines, are tapped with thimble and hand respectively. The chorus sits at the right of the stage.

There are few characters in the plays; the Shite or hero, the Waki or attendant, and the Tzure, secondary personage. Sometimes there are other attendants, reapers or sailors. The parts are all taken by men. The actors wear masks in the rôles of women, old men and demons. These masks are often extremely old and beautiful. Minoru says that a commonplace actor cannot wear a good mask. He cannot make himself one with it.

The Nō costumes are gorgeous in colour and stuff. Many of our museums have collections of them.

The music of Nō is a subject in itself. It is built upon a subtile system of rhythms, based upon what we should call Pythagorean theories —the Yo and the In, the Yang and Yin of China. The Japanese ear

[2] Translated from the Chinese by Arthur Wayley.

recognizes more intervals than does ours, accustomed to the piano. The chant somewhat resembles our plain chant. A similar mode of ornamentation may be found in Italian or Russian folk songs, or, for example, in certain troubadour songs. The effect, bizarre at first, becomes extraordinarily expressive and beautiful as one begins to understand it.

The text is partly in prose, partly in verse. It is written in the Court conversation language of the fourteenth century, a style still in use in writing. The subjects of Nō, as were the subjects of Greek plays, are familiar legends and incidents in the lives of heroes. Buddhist texts are frequently quoted, and well known poems. About 250 plays written before the seventeenth century are still given.

The Nō is thus a combination of the splendour of colour with the poetry of motion, music and idea. Had the Russian Ballet of Diglieff, in its best days, been connected with the mysteries, it might perhaps have been compared with it, although the ballet was more mimetic. A popular theatre was founded in the seventeenth century. Although imitating Nō in many ways, it was a theatre like our modern one, vulgarly mimetic and sensational. Its actors and incidents are familiar to everyone in the prints of the Ukiyo-ye school.

The art of Nō, like all the great arts of the world, is confined in a rigid form, is symbolic, expressive of the noumenon rather than the varied phenomena of action or emotion. Paradoxically, such art seems more free, conveys more directly the spirit of its idea. As the simplified planes of Egyptian sculpture contain the essence of the science of anatomy, so the symbolic gesture of the Nō actor is the synthesis of expression. One of the proverbs of this, to us formal and sophisticated art is, "The Heart is the form."

In words which remind us of Lao Tse, the Book of Criticism says, "Forget the theatre and look at the Nō. Forget the Nō and look at the actor. Forget the actor and look at the idea. Forget the idea and you will understand the Nō."

The Nō is a short recitation ending in a dance with chorus. A programme is composed of five or six pieces. First, a congratulatory piece or play of the gods. The gods have established and maintained the nation. Second, the battle or hero piece, for the emperors have pacified the country. Third, after battle comes peace. A Female or "Wig" play is given. The fourth piece is a play of spirits. The life of this world is a dream, after all. This play will show the adventures and sins of mortals and cause the audience to think of the world to come and of the Buddha. Fifth comes a moral piece on the duties of man. At the end is another congratulatory piece to call down the blessings of the gods. Sometimes this last play is omitted, but a congratulatory chorus is sung.

Thus a performance is a mystery of the whole life of man.

Let us summarize briefly a typical, simple Nō, *Nagoromo, the Cloak of Feathers.* A fisherman has landed on the shore one spring morning.

The song of the chorus and his words evoke the sea, the early mist, the still shining moon, the wind in the pines. But to-day is no common day—"An empty sky with music, a rain of flowers, strange fragrance on every side."

Upon a tree, he finds a cloak of feathers. It is the cloak of a Tennin, a Celestial Dancer or angel. The Tennin appears and asks him to give it back to her. He refuses. Alas! She cannot return to heaven without her cloak. The flowers of her head-dress begin to fade, her garments are stained. The chorus sings for her a song of envy of the birds that can fly homeward. The fisherman is touched. If she will dance for him, he will return the mantle. She dances for him to the chanting of the chorus, marvellous dances of Heaven, until, at last, she disappears as a "mountain in the mist."

This is a fairy tale, but there are many other types of Nō, tales of war or exile, of heroism or passion. A favourite device is a ghost which returns to relate its past deeds and to ask for prayers. A battle does not take place on the stage but is mimed by the apparition. It is seen as it were through a refining veil, or in a mirror.

The warrior Kumagai having killed the hero Atsumori, is filled with remorse and becomes a priest. He makes a pilgrimage to pray for his victim's soul. The ghost of Atsumori appears to him and rehearses that last fight on the seashore at Suma. The boats of his clan have put to sea, leaving him behind. Perplexed, he spurs his horse into the waves.

> "And then
> He looks behind him and sees
> That Kumagai pursues him.
> He cannot escape.
> Then Atsumori turns his horse
> Knee deep in the lashing waves,
> And draws his sword.
> Twice, three times he strikes, then, still saddled,
> In close fight they twine, roll headlong together
> Among the surf of the shore." [3]

The wraith, excited by these memories, rises from the ground with drawn sword, to attack once more his enemy, but Kumagai calls on Buddha's name, and obtains his salvation. In another life they will be born as friends.

Our drama is one of action, the poetry, the fatality of action. The Japanese drama is one of concentration, of the perfect dramatic moment or situation, that moment Faust would fain retain. Such is the play *Ikuta,* in which the ghost of the same Atsumori returns at the prayers of his little son. The child has been informed in a dream that he must go to the forest of Ikuta. Accompanied by a priest, he reaches the forest at sunset. There, they see in a tent a magnificent young warrior clothed in blue and white and gold. It is the ghost of Atsumori. The child runs

[3] Translated by Arthur Wayley in *The Nō Plays of Japan;* George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London.

to greet his father whom he has never seen alive, but for whom he has so earnestly prayed.

What can exceed the pathos of this meeting of father and child drawn together by love across the tremendous gulfs of death and hell?

"Oh pitiful!
To see this child, born after me,
Darling that should be gay as a flower,
Walking in tattered coat of old black cloth.
Alas!
Child, when your love of me
Led you to Kamo shrine, praying to the God
That, though but in a dream,
You might behold my face,
The God of Kamo, full of pity, came
To Yama, king of Hell.
King Yama listened, and ordained for me
A moment's respite, but hereafter, never." [4]

He begins to dance the fateful tale of his death and of the fall of the Taira clan, when suddenly he stamps, shouting, "Who is that? Can it be Yama's messenger? He comes to tell me I have outstayed my time. The Lord of Hell is angry; he asks why I am late."

He must return to fight with demons. He is ashamed his child should see him thus.

"Oh pray for me, pray for me
When I am gone, he said,
And, weeping, weeping,
Dropped the child's hand."

Like the story of Œdipus is the story of Kagekiyo, the old, blind warrior in exile. His daughter, wandering about the country in search of him, asks the way of the old blind beggar. He feels that it must be his child, but sends her on. Even when she discovers who he is from the villagers and returns to him, he refuses to keep her with him in his misery. Weeping, she obeys him. The chorus sings:

"I am old: I have forgotten, things unforgettable!
My thoughts are tangled: I am ashamed.
But little longer shall this world
This sorrowful world torment me.
The end is near. Go to your home;
Pray for my soul departed, child, candle to my darkness.
Bridge to salvation!
'I stay,' he said, and she 'I go.'
The sound of this word
Was all he kept of her,
Nor passed between them
Remembrance other."

There is also the splendid poetry of Kakitsubata, where the glorious lady beloved of the poet Narihira appears resplendent as the iris, in the iris swamp where once he thought of her.

[4] *Ibid.*

A priest, seeing the flowers, sings in words that are strangely familiar:

"Time does not stop and spring passes,
The light foot summer comes nigh us.
The branching trees and the bright, unmindful grass
Do not forget their time,
They take no thought, yet remember
To show forth their colour in season." [5]

This apparition, arrayed like the flower described in Narihira's poem, "in a court dress brought from China," is there to tell us that beauty is eternal. Narihira himself was the incarnation of a Bosatsu's music, and her spirit is the creation of his thought of her among the iris flowers.

How exquisitely are entwined here the worlds of thought and manifestation!

*Chorio* is a drama of initiation. Chorio dreamed that upon the bridge of Kahi he should meet an ancient man who could teach him the "art of fighting." When he awoke he went to Kahi but arrived too late. However, he returned another morning and saw, coming towards him on horseback, an ancient man so majestic that he knelt before him. The old man threw his shoe into the river. Chorio jumped in among the whirlpools and rocks of the rapids. Then a dragon rose up from the dark mists and fought with him for the shoe. Chorio drew his sword and struck a great blow at the dragon. Victorious, he brought back the shoe to the Ancient Worthy, Kosekko, who alighted, saying, "Well done. Well done." And he gave a scroll of writing to Chorio, containing all the secret traditions of warfare. And Kosekko said, "That dragon was Kuannon. She came here to try your heart, and she must be your goddess hereafter."

This meeting must remind one of that meeting described by Ramaswamier in *Five Years of Theosophy,* when he saw a solitary horseman riding towards him on a road near Sikkim, and recognizing a Mahatma, fell upon his knees in the dust.

The tone of all these plays is religious. The only true end of man is enlightenment. Men may love or fight, but at the last their souls turn wearily to the Buddha, who saves them through his Grace, at the prayer of the righteous. His Law alone endures.

There are now five Nō theatres open to the public in Tokyo, besides which, Nō are performed at religious celebrations, weddings and festivities. We do not realize what such a theatre means until we compare it with our own theatre of to-day. We have not a single play house in New York or London devoted to the classics or to maintaining a standard of modern drama.

We have exiled not only the kings and master builders, but the dramatists also. When shall we remember the real purpose of the drama, "To purge the soul through pity and through terror"?

JEUNESSE.

[5] Translated in *Noh or Accomplishment,* by Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound—Macmillan.

# SELF-CONTROL

THE expression, self-control, is so common that it seems hardly necessary to define it. But self-control as understood by Theosophy has a much deeper and more comprehensive meaning than it is generally supposed to have.

What is the self that is to be controlled? And what (or who) is to control it? St. Paul speaks of the two natures fighting against each other, so that when he would do good, evil was present to try and defeat him; and Theosophy speaks of the higher self and the lower self struggling against each other, each seeking to be master. What is this lower self? It is a body of forces or powers that can be used either for the preservation of life or for its destruction. It is like fire and electricity. Electricity when under the control of intelligence, is a splendid servant, but when not controlled it becomes a destructive force. So fire may be a blessing or a curse; it may bring cheer and comfort to our homes, or it may be a raging flame that sweeps away our homes and destroys life. To be a blessing it must be controlled.

Words, deeds, thoughts, emotions must all be controlled if life is to be a blessing. There may be, and often is, control of words but not of thoughts and emotions. When it seems to be an advantage to be silent, men control their words, but bitterness still rules within. Napoleon said if he could keep his anger below his chin, he was all right, but if it rose above, he lost control of others. There is often a control of appetites by prize fighters and athletes because of the greater good that will come to them from this control. But internally they are unchanged; the same desires are there, only held back for a little while during training, as one holds back a fiery horse, and when the race or the fight is over the appetites are indulged as much as ever.

There is also control of the desire to harm another, because of the fear of evil consequences that may follow if the injury is done.

All this is far below self-control as defined by Theosophy; in fact, this is sheer selfishness, a desire for happiness, prosperity, and success, regardless of their effects on others. Thus the lower self seems to be separated from others and looks on others as enemies if they interfere with, or limit its happiness. Its interest centres in having what it desires for itself alone. Theosophy teaches that *separateness* is the great heresy, that universal brotherhood is a fact in nature, that we are members one of another, and that we can only attain to good as we seek to impart it to others. This takes us back to thoughts and motives, which are more important than words or deeds. Thoughts are often hidden by words and deeds. So the control of self is the control of thoughts and motives, and this is never attained without strong desire and long continued effort of will. When we come to see that we are not separate, but parts of one whole, one with all things and all beings, and, as St. John says,

that "we dwell in God and God in us," we shall desire to live true lives. We shall then desire to think thoughts of kindness and love, for by so doing we may reach true self-control. On the other hand, selfish thoughts produce hatred, strife, divisions and unhappiness to ourselves and others. But thought and service for others, with the forgetting of self, will bring happiness and joy, for the words of Jesus are still true:—"He that would save his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."

We see then the importance of real self-control; our own welfare and that of others demands it. It is necessary for true success in life. We cannot enjoy perfect physical health unless we control the emotions; anger, envy, and jealousy are foes of health of body and mind. No matter how great and wise a man may be, if he yields to fits of anger at critical moments, life for himself and others will be spoiled. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." In occultism no progress can be made without it; so from the beginning of our studies we are urged to cultivate it—"raise the self by the self," and strive to bring the lower self into subjection to the higher. We must still the lower voices before we can hear the higher. We must find the place of peace before we can really grow. How may we win self-control? There are some ways easier than others, and we may each find some help in the struggle.

The old phrenologists used to teach that the faculties work in groups; some are leaders, some helpers and some followers. Fear is a strong faculty and if the self-reliant faculties are not strong, fear will rule them and some others. Out of fear comes doubt, despondency, jealousy and other inharmonious conditions. Fear is cowardice, so if we can conquer fear, its opposite—courage—will manifest and destroy a good many other things that hinder growth and progress. So it is a surer way to conquer the leader than to try to destroy the things that are born of fear.

To conquer fear there must be self-knowledge. If you know your weakness, remind yourself of the strong opposites that are yours if you cultivate them—hopefulness, self-reliance, and conscience. Fear is often the result of ignorance, as a child in a dark room is afraid, but when a light is made in the room his fears are overcome. The principles of Theosophy will help greatly in overcoming fear and its brood of evils.

Another evil leader is sensuality, the indulgence of the animal senses for the sake of pleasure. The indulgence of animal appetites brings a number of attending evils, and man becomes a slave to eating, drinking and pleasure. To conquer this we must study the effects of wrong eating, overeating and over-excitement of any kind. This knowledge with the use of reason will greatly assist the development of will power, so that in time we shall have no difficulty in deciding what and when we want to eat and drink and enjoy. I have already referred to prize fighters and athletes as examples, and the training of these may be studied with profit.

Perhaps the most difficult thing to conquer is vanity. The grosser forms we may recognize in ourselves and begin to correct them, but we are often blind to the higher forms and so do not attempt to conquer them. Vanity is the perverted, or excessive action of what the phrenologist calls "love of approbation." When rightly used and controlled, it tends to make our intercourse with each other pleasant; it helps to civilize and harmonize men, and to restrain selfishness. It can be educated to move in proper channels, and unless it is so educated it produces some of the worst evils in life, such as insincerity, pretence, extravagance, and all kinds of shams. It even affects our religion, so that that which above all things should be sincere is at last used to win praise. When vanity is strong, men seek to win golden opinions instead of seeking to be right and true. They cease to value that which is intrinsic and seek for that which will buy things. Vanity leads to falseness, boasting, flattery, extravagance, and dishonesty. It makes men insincere in thought and conviction, for it weakens the conscience so that we do not see clearly what is right and honourable. Few of us are strong enough to stand alone, so opinions that are unpopular are held by few, but when they begin to be popular, multitudes endorse them. When anti-slavery sentiments were unpopular few confessed to holding them, but when the cause became victorious, almost everyone confessed his belief in them.

It is most important that we seek to control this faculty so that we may live and act truthfully, sincerely, and lovingly, and thus win reality of character, when our yea will be yea, and our nay, nay, for Jesus says whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. How to do this is a most important question. We must first see and feel our weakness and imperfection, and earnestly aspire after the perfect. Self-knowledge comes by self-examination, and by study of the highest examples and ideals.

Following this course, little by little the spiritual *will* may be awakened, but it is a long, hard battle; requiring patience and faith. The greatest help may be found in daily meditation, self-study and prayer.

If we can master these three qualities—fear, sensuality, and vanity—we shall have largely won self-control. Let us never forget that selfish thoughts fill the mind with darkness and hatred, causing strife and divisions, with unhappiness to ourselves and others. On the other hand, thought and service for others, with the forgetting of self, bring happiness and lasting joy.

Self-control for our own sake, and for the sake of others is necessary, for it is obedience to, and the expression of, a great law of life, and this obedience will lead us out of darkness into light, out of bondage and misery into liberty, health, peace and happiness.

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

"THERE are few things more helpful," said the Recorder, "than experience on the subject of prayer and meditation,—I mean on the method of prayer, on how to pray and how to meditate; and I wish that some of you people would contribute."

"If prayer may be defined as the science and art of communicating with the spiritual world," the Philosopher responded, "it necessarily must be the study of a life-time, and a progressive study; so that practices and methods which are helpful at one stage, might easily be hindrances at another. Allowance must be made also for individual temperament. Some people, for instance, whose minds are very active, and who are engrossed in worldly affairs, including both real and imaginary duties, require a more 'mental' method than those whose interest and attention are given already to spiritual things. To get rid of the 'worldliness' of their minds, they must use their minds for spiritual purposes, both during their time of prayer, and whenever they have an opportunity to do so. If, when they begin to pray or to meditate, they find their minds 'buzzing', it would be best for them, until their minds quiet down, to read some devotional book—a book of sermons or of meditations—pausing at each sentence or paragraph to think it over. Little by little they should be able to start their own minds working, independently, in the right direction, and, through the properly directed activity of their own minds, they should be able to lead themselves to a right desire, and, finally, to a right resolution,—which may be regarded as the true objective of meditation."

"I do not understand how you identify a right resolution with what you suggested at first, namely, that prayer may be defined as the science and art of communicating with the spiritual world." Our Visitor raised the question.

"Right resolution, if carried out, is merely an extension in time of communication with the spiritual world. A passing vision, a flash of insight, is of very little use to us, unless it result in corresponding action."

"Could you illustrate what you have been saying?"

"I will try. Suppose you have been reading a chapter in the *Imitation of Christ*. Let us assume that when you begin it, you are 'out of tune' with spiritual things, and that it is not until the end of the chapter that anything begins to work 'inside of you'. The last verse reads: 'How small soever anything be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded, it keepeth thee back from the highest good, and defileth the soul.' Perhaps you do not receive a direct impulse from that, but *you begin to talk to the Master about it*. Your reading has attuned you to that extent.

You might say to him: 'Yes, Lord, I wish to serve and to obey thee. I wish that obedience to thee might become my greatest joy. [Now try to imagine and thus to see for yourself what it would be like if obedience to the Master were to become your greatest joy.] Yes, I can see it. There is that child of the B.'s; their only child. She adores her father, and because she adores him, if he tells her to do something, or expresses any desire, she is thrilled with delight at the prospect of being able to please him, by carrying out his wishes, by serving him. I might love thee like that. I wish to do so. Please, I beg of thee, help me to that end. [Now, as the result of the slight feeling which your *meditation* has already generated, your mind becomes more creative in its activity, and sees into spiritual facts more clearly.] And I do not want to rest content with the blind devotion of a child. I want the devotion, the love, the worship. But I want understanding too. Without understanding, I cannot be of real service to thee. And I can see how a General might serve his Commander-in-Chief,—with what delight, and with what intense appreciation of his superior's genius. I can see his heart and intellect and every faculty he possesses, on fire in loving, intelligent, forceful, concentrated obedience. It would be obedience, and yet there would be no thought of obedience, because he would have identified himself so completely with the plans and wishes of his superior. There would be utter self-forgetfulness. There would be the delight of the child's heart, *plus* the delight of the man's intellect. . . . Give me, I implore thee, love such as that,—the love of an understanding heart. It would be wonderful. . . . But thou canst give, thou sayest, only as I give to thee! . . . The widow's mite . . . The seven loaves and few small fishes . . . We must give our all, no matter how little that may be, before thou canst multiply and make infinite! Yes, I understand. And that is my desire . . . Thou sayest that I cannot do it all at once; that I must give thee the whole of one thing before I can give thee the whole of everything . . . But what have I to give thee, Lord? I am poor; I have no talents; my time is not my own . . . Have I no sins, thou sayest; no weaknesses which might be turned into weapons of love for thee? And could I not give thee one of these? . . . Truly I should, but I have tried and failed. Never once have I given thee anything completely. There is my habit of interrupting others, and the offence I give so often in that way. I have tried to cure myself; have tried to listen patiently . . . Ah, "patiently": perhaps that was the cause of the trouble! . . . I should resolve definitely and finally to make an offering of this habit to thee; I should ask myself when and against whom I sin most frequently; I should attack the enemy at that point; I should concentrate my attention there, where I am weakest; I should ask myself why I have failed in the past; I should study the nature of the enemy to be conquered. Yes, I see. Interruption is only the outer expression of an attitude of heart

and mind. What impels me to interrupt? Do I think my own ideas so much more valuable than the ideas of others, that I cannot wait until they have articulated theirs? Would it matter if I never uttered mine? Is it egotism against egotism? But in that case, need I be negative to the other man's attitude? Need I be dominated by him? Need I permit him to drag me down to his plane? Might I not meet his lack of interest in my ideas, with intense interest in his? Should I not listen with thee, dear Lord and Master, and listen also for thy comment on what he says? . . . Or is the cause of my habit something quite different? Clearly, at my next meditation I must study this question again. I must discover what stands in my way. But this much I can resolve for to-day: at lunch, when I shall meet him, I will not interrupt, and I must watch my desire to do so in order to trace the desire to its root, if that be possible . . . Master, help me to see, to understand myself, to will and to conquer! Very little do I love thee, because I love myself with most of the love thou givest me for loving. But I long to love thee, and if I can conquer self-love at one point, I shall at least have that much more of love to give to thee. And thou multipliest: thou wilt take my small gift and wilt breathe upon it and set it afire and some day that fire will consume my self-love, and I shall love thee utterly and for ever!'

"That," continued the Philosopher, "is of course only a brief outline of what I would call one form of meditation. I suggest it merely to show the way in which reading may serve us, as a spring-board serves a diver. Our experience ought soon to teach us what kind of books will help us most. It may be that on some particular morning, it would be wisest to begin with one book and to pass on to another. We may need to lead ourselves from a comparatively lower plane, to the plane of our real desire. In some cases such a poem as Thompson's 'Hound of Heaven' will start the mind and the imagination working, these, in their turn, illuminating and firing the heart. You remember the words:

> Halts by me that footfall:
> Is my gloom, after all,
> Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
> 'Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest
> I am He whom thou seekest!
> Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me.'

On another day, in a different mood, the same man might find that, instead of poetry, he could draw inspiration only from some purely intellectual thesis, or from a life of Buddha, or of Christ, or of one of the Saints. The beginner must tempt his appetite! It is only the veteran, with well established and well regulated habits, who can afford to consume the same simple diet day after day."

"I can see value in your method," remarked the Pragmatist, an

old student of Theosophy, "but the method of Buddha should, I think, be used also. You remember the *Mahâ-parinibbâna-Sutta:* 'Now these stages of deliverance, Ananda, from the hindrance to thought arising from the sensations and ideas due to external forms, are eight in number.' Then he shows the way of escape from wrong self-identification. We should meditate upon the fact that we are not these forms, or the space which forms occupy, or even the mental concept of forms: we are above all these, as the beholders of mental concepts,—and so on, back to the eternal and changeless Self. . . . It is a method which requires active and concentrated thought, but comparatively little reading. A Buddhist probably would confine himself to a single verse from one of the Suttas."

"Some people make the mistake," commented the Theologian, "of setting themselves a task in the matter of reading,—I mean spiritual reading. They try to read at least one page or five or ten pages every day. There are times when a few words will be sufficient to start a real meditation. For instance, 'Thy will be done' may suggest the prayer,—Thy will be done in and on and through me. Instantly we may see that such a prayer is good, but is negative. This will lead to a new and more positive prayer, namely: may we *do* Thy will, to-day, at all hours of the day, and in particular at certain moments when experience has taught us that we are very much inclined to prefer our own will. This, in turn, will lead to a consideration of the obstacles to be overcome. We shall try to formulate these and shall probably discover that among them we must count our stupidity, our laziness, our irritability and impatience. It would be possible, of course, to continue such a meditation almost indefinitely, particularly if we take up the subject of our stupidity, the range of which is limitless, as we may be sure! But it is wiser not to attempt too much. We should confine ourselves to the main obstacles we are attacking, or perhaps to the obstacle which stood out most prominently in our effort of the day before, whether this be under the head of laziness, of irritability, or of intellectual blindness. Then we should resolve to overcome that obstacle, as has already been suggested, at a definite point, in a definite way."

"If, at the time of our meditation, we have no book within reach," the Sage remarked, "we might find an excellent substitute in some remembered incident from the life of one of the Masters. Take, for instance, the arrival of Christ at the city of Samaria, where he sat by the well, 'being weary with his journey'. We, perhaps, sometimes imagine ourselves to be mortally tired. We feel as if we could not move hand or foot, and as if the least mental effort were impossible. Do all of us realize, I wonder, that as yet we do not know the meaning of fatigue, and that the exhaustion of great Adepts must necessarily be infinitely greater than our own? Orthodox Christians miss so much of the wonder of Christ's achievement, by emphasizing his divinity at the expense of his

humanity. Some of them would think it insulting to suggest that at times he must have felt worn out,—while, to suppose that he could feel worn out now, to them would seem blasphemous. They do not understand that his triumph over exhaustion was one of the ways in which he showed his supreme greatness. This, of course, stands out particularly during his last three days of life in Palestine. People seem to think that a man is great because he is strong. Actually, a man is strong only in relation to others who are not as strong as he is. His greatness consists in triumphing over his weakness. . . . But the fruit of that meditation, if it were mine, would be that most of us are probably misunderstanding, not only Masters, but those who are much closer to us and perhaps our immediate superiors in the hierarchical chain. One of the most cruel things I have ever witnessed was the result of underestimating the human needs of a chêla. Fortitude, strength of character and of will, were rightly attributed to him; but because the terrific strain that was being put upon these great qualities was not appreciated, and because it was imagined that he could do work easily which in fact he could do only at great cost, he was left without help when he needed help most. We should ask ourselves, therefore, what we might do to lighten the burden of those whose responsibility in the work is greater than our own. Nearly always we shall find that this will not involve doing new work, but, instead, the more complete performance of our present duties. In the eyes of the gods, I suspect that most of us only half do anything. If we were to try to do some one thing with absolute perfection, it would, I believe, be a valuable and perhaps an astonishing experience. As it is, much of the burden of spiritual beings of all grades, whether incarnated or not, consists, I believe, in finishing what we only half perform, and in cleaning up the mess we leave behind us. Both sympathy and gratitude should compel us to change our ways in these respects. We may be certain that when Christ, travelling from Judæa into Galilee, was 'wearied with his journey', and sat by the well to rest ('his disciples were gone away into the city to buy meat'), he would not have been wearied if his disciples had not overslept that morning, or had not forgotten to provide food for the journey, or had not quarrelled among themselves, or had not in some way put a needless extra burden upon him . . . It is what we are doing all the time!"

"I think that one of the most difficult and most important aspects of prayer, is *right receiving*", the Student volunteered. "We know that in order to give to others, we must receive from the Masters; for otherwise we should have nothing to give. One or another of them has said often: 'Receive from me if you would give to others.' But how can we receive? What does it mean? What would you do if told to open your heart to receive? . . . The answer, to my mind, is to be found through the analogy of our relations with people who are near and dear to us. Consciously to receive their love involves, among other things, the belief

that they love us, and next, recognition of proofs of their love. We cannot wait until Christmas or birthdays, and for the exchange of gifts, for this recognition. To remain alive to the love that surrounds us—and, if we are not alive to it, we shall not only fail to receive it, but shall fail to be grateful for it—to remain alive to love, we must pay attention to and must appreciate, its constant and often silent expression. The deepest love does not parade itself. Its silences may be more significant than its words. There are acts of self-effacement which say more than any other gift can say. As between the Masters and ourselves, we miss all these finer expressions of their love, unless we train ourselves in gratitude by looking always for the opportunity to be grateful. As a friend said to me the other day, he was convinced that he would not have a roof over his head or a crust to eat or a book to his name, if it were not for the loving kindness of his Master. Some people are inclined to assume that what they own is theirs by right of Karma. I should not like to see what would happen to them if the Karma of Masters did not stand between them and their own!

"But the main factor is faith. We do not believe—knowing ourselves as we do—that a Master could love us. But the answer is,—he can, because he is a Master! That such a feat is easy, is more than I find it possible to believe; but that they do love us, I venture to say I know. And it is cruel not to recognize it; cruel not to receive it. If I, as a father, were to spend my life for my children, and they were to take it as a matter of course, or were to believe that I did it merely from a sense of duty,—I know how I should feel, while they, of course, would cut themselves off from any benefit except the most external. . . . By some miracle, we *must* believe; we must 'open our hearts to receive' by welcoming the love that is given us, and by taking it to ourselves with joy and gratitude."

"I agree absolutely with what you have said", the Philosopher remarked. "But I have known those whose tendency lies in the opposite direction—a few whose daily inner experience it has been to be 'patted on the back' by all the Masters in space. As a form of psychic delusion, it would be difficult to imagine a worse."

"I am glad you spoke of it", replied the Student, with a smile which suggested similar recollections. "Perhaps it would be well to add that true recognition of the Masters' love for us is accompanied invariably by abject self-abasement.

"There is one other point which has a direct bearing on the subject of prayer and meditation, as regards their spirit rather than their method, but which, because it is vital to success, ought not, I think, to be omitted. It constitutes, as I see it, one of the greatest as well as the least necessary of obstacles to progress in discipleship: I mean the attitude which sees attainment as far off. I know men to-day who are trying to become disciples. They plod along, courageously, persever-

ingly, denying themselves this and that,—'holding on.' They believe in it, they want it, they love the idea of it sufficiently to be willing to make real sacrifices for it. But I have seen those same men working for some goal which they believed within their reach; which three or four months of strenuous effort would enable them, they thought, to attain. In that case they worked with enthusiasm, with energy, with enjoyment. Some of them could neither speak nor think of anything else. It may have been some business or literary achievement which they had in view. In any case, they would have been the first to admit that its importance was as nothing in comparison with their 'real' aim—that of discipleship. And while it seems to them that in their efforts for discipleship they never arrive anywhere, and that they do nothing except make new beginnings, they have often experienced the joy of success in the less important fields of their enterprise.

"Why do they not work for discipleship as they work for lesser things? Is it because they desire the less more ardently than the greater? To answer in the affirmative would not be fair. If they could choose between the two kinds of success, they would unhesitatingly choose success in discipleship. They are paralysed by their own mental attitude. They see discipleship in terms of infinity, or at least as if it were synonymous with Adeptship. There are those to-day, we have been told, who are so near their goal, without knowing it, that if they could escape from the self-hypnosis of its remoteness, they would find themselves well within reach of home.

"The aspirant for discipleship too often makes the mistake against which Sir Isaac Pitman used to warn his students of stenography—the mistake of glancing at later chapters. It was not only that they became discouraged by this general impression of 'so much more to be learned', but that they lost the sense of completeness and finality for the task which immediately confronted them, and which would have proved easy if taken alone. A month of intense effort—though no greater effort than they give frequently to other things—would work an astonishing change in the spiritual status of those who, with good will but without energy, are trying to become disciples." T.

# LETTERS TO STUDENTS

September 9th, 1913.

DEAR ————

I have your letter from ————. Do you not see that your constant references to your failures—such a statement as that you "failed at every point"—is plainly looking at and estimating *results?* How do you know you failed? You may not have succeeded in doing what *you* wanted to do, but are you sure you failed to do what the Master wanted? You must stop this judging and taking for granted that when you do not accomplish *your* will, you are failing to accomplish his. As a matter of fact, he is doing with you what he wishes. You are having the experiences he wants you to have. There is no question of failure or success about it; it is simply so,—just as he wants it to be.

This constant looking for results, and working for results, makes you morbid and depressed. Try for a while to have faith that things as they are, are the way they should be, and that you are not constantly upsetting the universe.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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September 20th, 1913.

DEAR ————

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The problem of learning not to look for and estimate events by results, is not an easy one. You must go back to it again and again and again. We are all constantly seeking for results, working for results, estimating our accomplishment by results—and it is wrong.

A very little progress on the Path, indeed a very little ordinary worldly wisdom, proves to us that we *cannot* know what is good for us, or for others. A little faith tells us that the Master *does* know, and shapes events to that sole end. We acknowledge this as a theory; we believe it as a fact of life; we write and preach and teach it as a law; we adopt it as a rule for our guidance; and then we turn round instantly and agonize because this or that is the matter and *we* do not like it. We cannot help suffering as yet when things go wrong with ourselves or others, but we can stop agonizing and kicking against the pricks. And when we learn to do this a little, we get peace; we get past these nerve-racking, sodden, deadening rebellions against what is. We *accept* our own limitations and those of others, whether physical, mental, moral or spiritual. ———— has a physical limitation, but that is the least important of all limitations. We do not see it so because of our materialistic education. We look at things from a one-life point of view. These

things are hard to make a part of our daily consciousness, and yet it can and must be done. . . .

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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September 25th, 1913.

DEAR ———

. . . I do not believe you begin to realize how far-reaching is the looking for results—how deep it goes. You want ——— to get well. You want this from the depths of your heart, and every time he is worse, or you think he is worse, you are miserable and upset. Yet you say to yourself, perhaps many times a day, that you want the Master's will to be done. The trouble is that we *say* that, but we do not feel it. We *feel* what *we* want. This real identification of our will with his is an age-long struggle, and finally comes from a perfect realization that his will is best for us and for others. This, too, we accept theoretically, but we do not actually make it a part of our lives. We want money and do not get it. It is almost impossible for us really to believe that if we did get it we should not be better off. Perhaps we want it for others, and then it is still harder. But the law is the same. We must not be discouraged if it takes us a long time to learn this lesson. . . .

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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October 26th, 1913.

DEAR ———

. . . I am sorry I have written so infrequently lately, but I have been going backwards and forwards between New York and Watch Hill, and have been very busy when in New York, and anxious to get complete rest while here. . . .

When we resolve upon some good action, or make a new rule of life, our lower nature enjoys in advance the esteem it will inspire and the good opinion it will have of itself: therefore it wishes to hurry, to go forward in advance of what the old churchmen would call the movement of grace.

Also, while grace inspires a horror of sin, and a wholesome fear of sinning, nature falls into an excessive and unreasonable anxiety. Grace excites repentance and a sincere and peaceful sorrow,—the lower nature conceiving an impatient chagrin, full of trouble and depression. This eagerness after virtue comes from self-love and not from the Master.

A great saint once said: "How is it that a sin or imperfection makes us astonished, troubled, or impatient? Doubtless it is because we

think we are resolute and strong, and so when we fail we are troubled, uneasy, offended: while if we realized what we really are, instead of wondering at our falls, we should marvel that we ever stand upright." This eagerness does not bring about the desired result; it prevents it.

Another spiritual writer says:

"You think too much about yourself. Why do you always worry and distress yourself because you find it hard to conquer your defects? It is pure pride. God does not absolutely require that you should conquer them, but that you should desire to do so, and try to do so for his sake. Labour then to this end, gently and quietly, and be at peace.

"Ardent natures who are prone to this mistaken eagerness weary themselves and suffer anguish of heart and tension of spirit, instead of practising a gentle and peaceful recollection; and so, when they experience dryness in their prayers, they make astounding efforts to extract effective acts from their hearts, instead of accepting their condition quietly, with humility and resignation."

Another writer says: "Your great mortification must consist in taming and moderating your over-activity and vivacity of mind and heart; in aiming to do all for God, but gently, suavely and peacefully; never giving way to violent emotion even in the impulse of devotion."

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Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

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December 29th, 1913.

DEAR ————

I wrote you a note a week or so ago, but there are other things in my mind which I should like to say, and which have a bearing on the present situation, not only so far as you are concerned, but so far as the Movement as a whole is concerned; for the two should be, and to a certain extent are, synonymous.

The last few months have been a period of intense outer activity, during which we have had an opportunity of putting into practice, as well as we know how, the principles we have been taught. Perhaps the words outer activity are too circumscribing, for the situation referred to covers such a thing as ———— illness, which in another sense prevented outer activity. Every one of us has had to meet the same thing to a greater or less degree, and the progress that we have made in recent months or years is measured by the way in which we acted during this period.

Another indication of progress is the number of obstacles which life has thrown in our path to prevent our doing what we know we ought to do. Life helps the beginner. It is neutral in our early struggles, and then, as we make some progress towards self-conquest, it throws a constantly increasing number of barriers in our way, so that

we may become strong in surmounting them. For instance, at the Mission which we run for the reformation of drunkards, they are urged to take the first step, and, if they are willing to do this one thing, they are taken out of their old environment, are cleaned, fed, clothed, housed, and are surrounded by all the circumstances that will tend to reinvigorate their weakened will and their flickering desire, and to help them in their elementary step toward regeneration. The exact opposite is the case with the saint. The moment his attention is called to some fault, life seems to conspire, and in fact does conspire, to present him with endless opportunities to succumb to temptation or to conquer. Very often all internal and external supports and consolations are withdrawn, and he is forced by circumstances to conquer or to fall alone.

These are the extremes,—there is, of course, every degree of variation in between.

And we are all somewhere in between; that is to say, in our struggles upward our circumstances are designed by a beneficent law, and by the Spiritual Beings who have our evolution in charge, to give us just that exquisite balance between helping and hindering circumstances that we can stand. The pressure of life is calculated to the fraction of an ounce. It is a fundamental spiritual law that we are never asked to do anything that we are not capable of doing. I mean this quite literally. We are, of course, sometimes stronger than we think we are; we have reserves of strength of which we are not aware, and these, when they exist, are sometimes taken into account. But I mean that we, just as we are, with our weaknesses, our faults, our laziness, our stupidity, our lack of understanding, are not asked to do anything which, all these things taken into account, we cannot do, and do without calling upon mysterious reserves of strength, which are supposed to appear upon demand from somewhere out of the sky. If we are accustomed to pray for strength and help in our struggles, that, too, is made a factor in our struggles, and we shall not get through unless we do pray.

Now mark one point. I said that we were never asked to do anything that we were not able to do. Do not forget that you do not know what it is that you are being asked to do. If you are trying to conquer a bad temper, and during the day your temper explodes, and you make an exhibition of yourself, it does not follow that this is a contradiction of what I have said above. And this for two reasons. The obvious one is that you did not do your best, or anything approaching your best to control your temper in those circumstances. Another and less obvious explanation is that the wisdom of those who guide us saw that we needed a vivid illustration of our fault, and therefore the pressure of circumstances was designed to cause an explosion, and to externalize our fault. You will also see that this is a dangerous doctrine for the multitude, for we could excuse any sin we ever commit upon such a basis,—were it not for the fact that, after all, all we are saying is that we were

tempted and fell because we were too weak to stand the temptation. The point I want to make is really quite different, and that is that we are quite incapable of judging results, and that therefore it is foolish, nay, worse than foolish, wicked, to become discouraged and disheartened because of our many failures.

Let us use another illustration. Suppose two people present themselves for training, and in the course of time are told to work together, perhaps one under the other. To their dismay they find that their personalities clash, and that they are in a perpetual state of irritation and fault-finding on one side, and hurt feelings, resentment, and wounded vanity on the other; while both are filled with constant criticism each of the other. They are mortified and ashamed and may even be discouraged. Of course this is silly when looked at from the point of view of the facts. These two hypothetical persons have within them all the faults which were indicated above. All that this enforced association did was to bring these faults to the surface, where they could be seen in all their ugliness, and conquered.

The director who placed them together knew in advance that they were going to jar and react on each other in just such ways, and, taking for granted of course that they were sincere in their efforts to improve themselves, and therefore to maintain a constant struggle against their faults, from his point of view the experiment has been a success; and instead of the whole affair being a lamentable exhibition of the inability of two otherwise excellent people to get along together, it was a well designed opportunity for two people to take a necessary step forward on the Path. Again you can see, therefore, how impossible it is for us to judge of results when we ourselves are concerned. We simply cannot, even when the situation is explained to us again and again. Where we ourselves are involved, we cannot understand until we have emerged from the experience by the higher side. We sometimes see the fruitful outcome of pain and struggle in others, even when they are in the midst of the fight. We can usually see the benefits after the battle is over. But each one of us, when it comes to his own life, has to go forward in darkness, because lack of understanding is an important factor in the problem.

All this is mental, and therefore one-sided and incomplete. In anything so infinitely complicated as the living of the higher life, where there are no two experiences which are exactly alike, there must be exceptions to any effort to express the rules of the game in words. But the laws that I have endeavoured to express above are pretty fundamental, and I think apply to all the cases I have ever observed. Now the value of having some simple expression of these general laws is, that even if we do not see, when our own struggles bewilder and confuse the mind, we can get solace and comfort and strength and renewed aspiration if we have faith enough to apply our fundamental principles to the

experiences through which we are passing. This is not easy, for it means making faith and trust dynamic powers in our lives, and that can only be done by love. Indeed, we cannot possess any of the qualities we need in our struggle upward in sufficient quantity and of sufficient quality, unless we are backed by love. We cannot really obey the Master unless we love him. We cannot really trust him with our lives unless we have that perfect confidence in him that springs only from love. We cannot have unquestioning faith in his wisdom, which gives us the courage to go forward in confidence and hope, unless our faith is illumined by love. And so I could go on and enumerate all the other qualities, but I have written enough.

With best wishes for the New Year, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

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*Not going out of the door I have knowledge of the world. Not peeping through the window I perceive heaven's Tao. The more one wanders to a distance the less he knows.*

*Therefore the wise man does not wander about but he understands; he does not see things but he defines them, he does not labour yet he completes.*—TAO-TEH-KING.

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*Who are they that have lost their labour, and in life mistaken their aim? They who think that what they do is right.*—THE KORAN.

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*The chief pang of most trials is not so much the actual suffering itself, as our own spirit of resistance to it.*—JEAN NICHOLAS GROU.

*The Essentials of Mysticism and Other Essays,* by Evelyn Underhill; J. D. Dent and Sons, London.

Everything Miss Underhill writes is stimulating. There is, perhaps, no writer to-day better equipped to interest the general reader in the wide field of mysticism, or in the biographies of mystics themselves. Approached with equal sureness from the practical and the philosophical points of view, her understanding of the mystical states of consciousness seems to have broadened and deepened with each successive book; and in this collection of thirteen essays, covering a wide range of subject, her conceptions have been sifted to their most compact expression, and in a few brilliant and lucid sentences the essentials of several aspects of mysticism are set so clearly before the reader, that he wonders how he ever confused mysticism with mistiness.

This is Miss Underhill's notable contribution to the intellectual life of our day. She has brought within the reach of the many who are vaguely turning towards religious biography and mystical achievement, the records of the mystics of all ages, and has interpreted those records—be they Hindu, Sufi, Greek, Catholic or Quaker—in such a way as to make them both understandable and attractive to the modern mind. Her method primarily is the theosophic one—to discern the truth and fundamental unity underlying all spiritual experience, and to point the way to a larger synthesis whose richness far outstrips any isolated example.

The first essay, "Essentials of Mysticism," gives a masterly survey of the place of mystic consciousness in the order of man's evolution. Mysticism is not a by-product; it is the next forward step of human development, towards which all that is highest and best in man's artistic and creative activity is now leading him. The mystic consciousness means entrance into the spiritual world—the world of Reality, to use Miss Underhill's favourite word. The second essay, "The Mystic and the Corporate Life", is directed against the current ignorant prejudice (seen most often among agnostics and Protestants) that the successful mystic is a "religious individualist" and "unsocial". "The Mystic as Creative Artist" shows that "When we ask what organ of the race—the whole body of humanity—it is, by and through which this supernal world thus receives expression, it becomes clear that this organ is the corporate spiritual consciousness, emerging in those whom we call, pre-eminently, mystics and seers" (p. 67). Ordinary artists crystallize, for us, glimpses of that Reality in which mystics habitually dwell.

In a most valuable essay, "The Education of the Spirit", Miss Underhill pleads against the serious failure of modern education which makes no provision for the education of children in the knowledge and practice of the spiritual life. She suggests a broad outline of how to begin such an education:—the need for it is apparent. It is too true that outside the religious orders, there is hardly an attempt made in this direction, and only by such effort will men be fitted to rise above the ordinary commonplaces of worldly experience.

"Will, Intellect and Feeling in Prayer", shows the need for a balanced and healthy development of these three faculties to attain a normal spiritual consciousness. The Mysticism of Plotinus and of three Medieval mystics follows,

and the book closes with three studies of "Mysticism in Modern France"—Soeur Thérèse, Lucie-Christine, and Péguy, all written with sympathetic understanding and a mature analysis of salient characteristics.

It is a matter for regret that where prolonged study and unusual intellectual capacity have produced so much that is excellent, Miss Underhill should still fail to appreciate the clear testimony of all great mystics to the survival and continued activity of spiritually developed individualities beyond the veil, communion with whom becomes a normal experience once that veil is pierced. Miss Underhill dislikes the intensely personal note of Christian mystics, failing to grasp the significance of the continuing humanity of a living Christ. Voices, conversations, direct sight of Christ or the saints are uniformly styled "visual or auditory hallucination" (p. 188), and the author divorces the "intuitive spiritual teaching" accompanying the voice of Christ, from that voice itself, crediting a psychologic state reacting to an inrush or "impact" of Reality. This is not only against the direct and explicit statements of nearly all ranking mystics,—their only repeated statements which Miss Underhill systematically discounts—but seems to us philosophically unsound, very hard to explain even in terms of modern psychology, and intrinsically almost impossible to believe. It suggests that even a splendid intellectual equipment is insufficient: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

A. G.

*The Thirteen Principal Upanishads,* Translated from the Sanskrit, by Robert Ernest Hume, M.A., Ph.D. (Oxford University Press, 1921).

Perhaps the scope and value of this translation of the greatest Upanishads may best be indicated by a sentence of W. D. Whitney's, written more than a generation ago, in reviewing an earlier translation: "If the non-Sanskrit-reading public is to have these obscure treatises placed in its hands at all for study, it ought first of all to know just what they say and what they do not say. Thus far it has had no means of doing this; no simple philological translation. . ."

A close study and a comparison of many passages with the original text show the present translation to be very much what Whitney asked for. The text is followed with unfailing accuracy and fidelity, even the order of the words remaining unaltered, so far as the difference of languages makes this possible. Dr. Hume has quite evidently spared no pains, neither time nor toil, to do an uncommonly thorough piece of work. That he has made a complete, thoughtful and very sympathetic examination of the whole available literature on the subject, whether published in India, Europe or America, the excellent Bibliography at the end of this stout volume shows.

Perhaps an idea of the quality of his work may best be given by quoting an often translated passage from the *Katha Upanishad,* known to a very wide circle of readers through Sir Edwin Arnold's verse rendering, *The Secret of Death.* This beautiful passage, Dr. Hume renders thus:

> Not with wealth is a man to be satisfied.
> Shall we take wealth, if we have seen thee?
> Shall we live so long as thou shalt rule?
> —This, in truth, is the boon to be chosen by me.
>
> When one has come into the presence of undecaying mortals,
> What decaying mortal here below that understands,
> That meditates upon the pleasures of beauty and delight,
> Would delight in a life over-long?
>
> This one thing whereon they doubt, O Death:
> What there is in the great passing-on—tell us that!
> This boon, that has entered into the hidden—
> No other than that does Nachiketas choose.

The closer one's acquaintance with the Sanskrit text, the better one realizes the complete accuracy of this translation.

Dr. Hume, who is Professor of the History of Religions in Union Theological Seminary, New York, gives a very attractive glimpse of his own life and personality in the Preface:

"In conclusion I would add a reverent salutation to India, my native land, mother of more religions than have originated or flourished in any other country of the world. In the very early years of childhood and later in the first period of adult service, it was the chief vernacular of the Bombay Presidency which furnished a medium, along with the English language, for intercourse with the wistful people of India, among whom are still many of my dearest friends."

The present reviewer is not convinced of the expediency of reversing the traditional order of the Upanishads, associated with the Commentaries which appear under the great name of Shankara Acharya, as Dr. Hume has practically done; and this, for two reasons: First, because the shorter Upanishads, with their ever varying colour and tone, are so much more readable, so much more likely to attract and hold the attention than the two very lengthy treatises which begin this version, forming 200 pages, of a total of 386; and, secondly, because of the formidable and somewhat forbidding character of the opening passages of both these treatises, which are likely to daunt and perplex more than they illuminate.

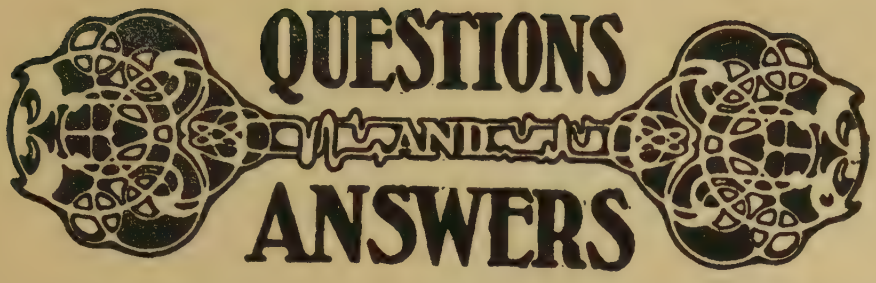
Again, there is much in the very valuable and thoughtful "Outline of the Philosophy of the Upanishads," forming the Introductory section of the book, which seems to fall short of finality. For example, the opening paragraph:

"Almost contemporaneous with that remarkable period of active philosophic thought the world over, about the sixth century B. C., when Pythagoras, Confucius, Buddha and Zoroaster were thinking out new philosophies and inaugurating great religions, there was taking place, in the land of India, a quiet movement which has exercised a continuous influence upon the entire subsequent philosophic thought of that country and which has also been making itself felt in the West. . ." this movement giving rise to the Upanishads.

We know, with great accuracy, the dates of Confucius and Pythagoras; we can come very close to the Buddha's dates. But to suggest that we have anything like the same certainty in the case of the Upanishads, is a somewhat daring proceeding. In the one case, we have accurate chronological facts; but, in the other, we have only a tissue of conjecture and theory, far more deeply influenced than is generally realized by the chronology for which Archbishop Usher is responsible, and which attributed the creation of the world to the year 4004 B. C. We do not wish to imply that Dr. Hume accepts this chronology; but the point is, that his predecessors did, especially the pioneers who wrote the able essays in the *Asiatick Researches,* and all later speculation as to dates in ancient India is deeply coloured by their work.

These still open questions in no way detract from the excellence of this work, as a thoroughly accurate and scholarly translation of the great Upanishads; and that, after all, is the heart of the matter.

C. J.




QUESTION No. 265.—*What is the true function of art, and what is its proper relation to religion?*

ANSWER.—Art,—whether in painting, music or literature—must be the true expression of genius, an illumination by that spark of the divine flame which is within each one of us. The function of art, therefore, must be the portrayal of the divine, the bringing of divine inspiration to the hearts and minds of men, the inculcation of divine principles. True art must be an expresson of true religion; through religion the true artist must find deeper and truer inspiration.

A.

ANSWER.—In the absence of a specific definition of what art means to the questioner, one must take the widest available which may cover all the so-called "arts." Then it would mean the expression and means of manifesting genius. Now genius is the activity of the soul—the life of the inner world. Then art is the translation of the activities of the soul into any form in which they can be expressed—by way of music, poetry, painting, sculpture and description. Allowing religion to be the search for and the expression of the soul and the inner life in external effects, real art and true religion are twin aspects of one great reality —life itself.

A. K.

ANSWER.—Remembering the various planes or strata of life, it would seem as if the function of art might vary on those planes, though with correspondences, also. What can we imagine of the spiritual plane where individuals have left behind the gross and petty forms of self that absorb our earthly attention? We can think of those individuals with their purified and enlarged faculties, ceaselessly and joyfully serving the August Presences that excel them in the power to serve. Would not the overflow of purified hearts be prayer as well as song? Might not their theme of joy include both delight at the fairness of the vision, and wonder over the marvellous manner of its working? In such song then, on the spiritual plane, there would be united,—religion as prayer, art as beauty, and science as the metaphysical structure of it all.

What is unified on high planes becomes differentiated on lower planes. That is why on our earth plane, art and science and religion are not often found together as one. The art with which we are acquainted would seem to be a translation from the spiritual plane to the psychic. And therein lies the great service it can render man. The life of the spiritual plane is so far outside the average man's field of interest as to be non-existent, unless the artist, as an intermediary, transposing it to a lower key, bring it within the range of ordinary apprehension; and thus, eventually, a few of those average persons who understand and love the transposition, through it, can arrive at its source.

The artist is an intermediary between the plane of earth and the plane of spirit. But the common opinion which holds the artist as a divine and holy creator is mistaken. The artist himself shares that popular mistake, inasmuch as,

having no scientific understanding of himself or the universe, he likewise believes that he creates what in truth he only sees as reflections or images of truth and beauty.

It is by reason of his psychic principle or faculty that the artist sees those reflections. The average man has to some extent that psychic faculty as well as the artist, but he does not develop it; on the contrary he too often occupies it with images of food, drink and his favorite sports. The artist, in whom it is developed, may be guilty of the same error; for the psychic plane, as a mirror, gives reflections and images both of high things and of low things.

C.

ANSWER.—A man's religion may, perhaps, be said to be his method of approach to God, to the Logos, the Divine. It is the path of his evolution toward his ultimate goal, toward his perfection, and toward union with the Heart and Source of Life, by whatever term we may choose to designate that Source. All that helps him on his path bears a direct relation to, is in fact a part of, his religion.

Plato speaks of beauty, truth and goodness as merely different aspects of the same thing, different revelations of the same spirit. Without some measure of truth, the path cannot be found at all. Without goodness, it cannot be followed; yet those who go by the path of goodness alone, travel a long and dreary road. Those who add the power to see and to love true beauty, the beauty of the spirit, must travel, it is true, the same road, but they travel it on wings. Hence all that helps toward a love and understanding of true beauty, is a help to religion.

Natural beauty is meant to be an open door to the spiritual world, the world of spiritual consciousness, and we ought to use it to try to enter in and share that consciousness. We do not think often enough of God as the greatest of all artists, or look at His creations of landscape, tree or flower as we would look at a picture or a poem, seeking to enter into and feel the meaning of the artist. An artist would be great, would be fulfilling the true function of art, in proportion as he saw and felt this beauty and the meaning of the Great Artist back of it, and so seeing and feeling, made that meaning and beauty manifest to others through his work.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—To become aware of some new aspect of beauty is, by that much, to enter more deeply into life; for, surely, beauty is our name for one of those gates of consciousness through which life flows in upon us,—life the creator, life the destroyer. If, then, it is true that beauty is an inherent part of life itself, of consciousness itself, it follows of necessity that beauty is something that all of us know a great deal about, and that anything which we truly know by experience about life, we know, potentially, about beauty.

When, at last, a man stops floating down the stream of life, and starts toward his goal, he begins to learn by experience something of the nature of this current which he is now opposing. If he be prudent, he will seek the counsel and guidance of other men who have fought their way forward towards the same goal. But in the confusion of many teachings, what and whom shall he follow; for every man's life sends him some message, whether he know it or not, and some, in addition, have made record in books, on marble or canvas, in music, or built their aspiration into cathedral stone that towers toward the stars.

What is the true function of art? What else but truly to teach beauty, that is, truly to teach life. But there are many things in life that do not interest the man who seeks his true goal,—there is life for the sake of sensation, art for the sake of art, finesse for "piffle's" sake. In the midst of his struggle a man craves the companionship of men who have struggled, and who, from the heart of the conflict, have spoken or painted or sung of the battle of life.

We know, instinctively, how to find what we really seek. Listen to a man

for ten minutes, on any subject, and you know the quality of life which flows across the words from him to you. Glance at a book, at a painting, and you may know little about it, but this you will surely know, that it does or does not speak to you straight from the heart of the conflict. The conflict,—yes, but whose conflict? Are we, then, marauders, each fighting for his own way at his own will? No, every fighting man has a practical religion, some altar at which he sacrifices self, some banner, some leader for which he will die.

There must be a very close relation between art which teaches the lessons of life, and religion for which men pour out life itself. If religion can inspire a man to die gladly for a cause greater than himself, can it not inspire art? Would you trust anything less potent than religion to inspire a coward to turn and fight steadily, a traitor to turn and live loyally, a glutton to turn and live selflessly? Some day we shall know more about the transcendent beauty which is to be found only at the heart of the conflict, for there the greatest of artists and warriors has set His banner which blazons a cross and a sword.

A. D.

ANSWER.—Just as we can see and interpret any given object in terms of matter, or of force, or of consciousness, so we can see and interpret the Logos, or deity in manifestation, in terms of truth, or of beauty, or of goodness. In both cases, however, in order to obtain an "all round" view, we must combine the three aspects or points of view. Thus, we may describe a man as lean (seeing him in terms of matter), or as lazy (seeing him in terms of force), or as clever (seeing him in terms of mentality); but, if we limit ourselves to one set of terms, we shall see only one-third of the man, as it were, and shall probably misunderstand that one-third. In somewhat the same way, a landscape can be seen by an artist, in terms of beauty; by a scientist, in terms of geology, or of fauna and flora; by a religious person, in terms of ethics. Each point of view, taken alone, is narrow and misleading. But the true mystic, the Theosophist, does more than combine the three aspects suggested. He sees in each the remaining two, and he sees in each and in all a revelation of God's being,—in the beauty, a reflection of the divine beauty; in the geology, or in the fauna and flora, a manifestation of the eternal ways of God, at work also in the perfecting of his own soul; in the ethical lesson, an expression, not only of the character, but of the purpose and goal of divinity.

Religion, a word said to be derived from *re,* again, and *lego,* I gather, and which therefore suggests the idea of "gathering back to the source," or of reunion,—ought to use art and science, as well as ethics, for this supreme purpose. It ought to recognize beauty and truth, no less than goodness, as aspects of the divine being, and also as interblending ladders, so to speak, up which man may ascend to reunion with God. Art, therefore, should be used by the Church as a path of devotion,—as an integral part of religion. Puritanism, at one time, tried to banish art from human life. The Roman Catholic Church, at one time, tried to banish science from human life. In neither case was the effort entirely insensate, because both art and science, divorced from goodness, lead directly to damnation. Yet "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world", led the hearts of men to revolt against these well-meant efforts to protect them, and to insist upon the opportunity to make right, instead of wrong use of truth and beauty. That the opportunity is misused, hideously and ceaselessly, is obvious. None the less, religion cannot solve the problem by an "act of divorcement", but only by an understanding of the facts and of their relation, —which means, in brief, by an understanding of Theosophy.

T.

# T·S·ACTIVITIES

The Convention of the British National Branch of The Theosophical Society was held at Newcastle-on-Tyne on September 18th, 1921. The meeting was called to order by Mr. E. H. Lincoln. Mr. Douglas was elected Chairman. The report of the Executive Committee, signed by A. Trood, E. Cassidy, C. G. Graves, J. Wilkinson, F. A. Ross, P. Douglas, E. H. Lincoln, was read and adopted. Mr. Lincoln, who reported as Secretary, concluded his statement by saying:

"May we, then, here and now, resolve that the coming year shall find us more efficient instruments in the Master's service, and that on the flood tide of this Convention we shall go forth strengthened and equipped for the warfare we must face and conquer, the warfare which is at the same time, the welfare, the real spiritual welfare of mankind."

The report of the Treasurer showed a balance in hand. Mrs. Lincoln, as Corresponding Secretary, told of most encouraging results with the unattached members. Books and pamphlets have been loaned, and the many letters written have evidently been much appreciated.

We now quote directly from the printed report of the Convention:—

"A communication from the Members of the Executive Committee in New York, concerning the relationship of the British National Branch to The Theosophical Society and suggested action for the widening of the life of The Theosophical Society in the British Isles, was then put before the members by Mr. E. H. Lincoln, who also read a splendid letter from Col. Knoff (another member of the Executive Committee) heartily supporting the communication; the idea is that the Lodges shall be represented direct as Branches of The Theosophical Society, carrying on their business with Headquarters through their own officials. In the discussion on this subject it was shown that the Executive Committee of the British National Branch as such, and the existing Offices, would become non-existent, and that in the long-run the adoption of the International System would be to the benefit of Branches and Members-at-large alike; it was also recommended that Members-at-large become members of Branches.

"The following Resolution was proposed by Mr. E. H. Lincoln, seconded by Capt. Graves and carried unanimously and afterwards signed by all the members present:—

"'Resolved that the British National Branch, as such, cease to exist, and that in future each Lodge would describe itself as the————————Lodge of The Theosophical Society.' (Signed) J. Wilkinson, C. G. Graves, Marie Potter, A. F. Mann, I. W. Short, Fredk. A. Ross, Espoir Bagnell, Theodora Dodge, Gertrude Spooner, George Wood, Ralph Dunn, S. Dunn, Thomas W. Lincoln, Paul Vogler, Jane Arabella Corking, T. Mackey, Florence I. Olsen, Hannah Maughan, Eva Cassidy, Ethel M. Lincoln, Gertrude Mackay, J. W. Mein, Margaret Parkes, M. Douglas, F. E. Atkinson, A. Trevor, J. Crawford, P. W. Ward, C. G. Ward, Amy H. Golightly, Elizabeth Howe, John H. Hardy, P. Douglas, E. Howard Lincoln, By proxy: Alice Graves, Hope Bagnell, Margaret Richards, Maribel Davey, Gladys Pearce."

The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY congratulates the British members of The Theosophical Society, and believes that their action will redound to the benefit of the work in Great Britain.

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# The Theosophical Society

## Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

BROOKLYN EAGLE PRESS